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LITTELL'S LIVING AGE.

Fifth Series, }
Volume LXIII.

No. 2299. — July 21, 1888.

{ From Beginning,
Vol. CLXXVIII.

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Single Numbers of THE LIVING AGE, 18 cents.

A SONG IN JUNE.

CALM in his chamber the dead man lay,
Shrouded and hid from the face of day.

All fair things in the world outside
Smiled in their fulness of summer pride.

Trees he had loved in his broad demesne,
Stood in their mantle of summer green.

Flowers he had tended, lived and grew,
Welcomed the sunlight and drank the dew.

Children — his own — with prattle and play
Filled the long hours of the sweet June day.

Children too young to grieve or weep,
Knew not the depth of his long quiet sleep.

Day wore on, and the clear cool night
Fell like a veil, with lessening light.

Night passed by, and the pale dawn broke,
Sleeping Earth from her slumber woke.

Through the death-chamber, by sound un-
stirred,
Trembled the song of a woodland bird —

Song as delightful, and glad, and free,
As a ransomed soul's in heaven might be.

And the mourner — the wife who had lost and
loved,
Felt half of the weight of her woe removed.

For she said: "'Tis an angel sent to tell
That with my beloved all is well."

After the night of weeping, she slept.
God save all who such tears have wept!

God send his angel blest to tell
That with their dear ones all is well!

Chambers' Journal. J. C. HOWDEN.

SUNSET.

DAY — like a conqueror marching to his rest,
The warfare finished and the victory won,
And all the pageant of his triumph done —
Seeks his resplendent chamber in the west:
Yon clouds, like pursuivants and heralds
dress'd

In gorgeous blazonry, troop slowly on,
Bearing abroad the banners of the sun
That proudly stream o'er many a warrior's
crest.

In the azure field a solitary star
Lifts its pale signal, and the glorious train
Of errant sunbeams, straggling from afar,
Reform their glittering ranks, and join again
Their father Phoebus in his golden car,
Whose panting steeds have snuffed the
western main.

GEORGE MORINE.

THEN AND NOW.

I.

Dost thou remember, love, how pale and wan
This lakelet ere the wintry days were gone,
With one green isle of glistening lily-leaves?

Dost thou remember, love, that starless night
When the winds ceased their sighing, in
affright,
And birds were silent under cottage eaves?

Remembering, strive a moment, love, to
guess
The woe of hearts unloved, their loneliness,
Their deathless pain no hour of rest relieves.

II.

How gleams the lake now in the summer
light,
While drifting lilies, golden-hued and white,
Fling back a kindred splendor to the sun!

Ere that great darkness awed us into fear,
The silver moon soared slowly, full and clear,
To skies where night was ended, just begun.

So mayst thou know how gladly I saw afar
Thy own sweet face shine like a splendid star;
What peace closed round me when the prize
was won.

Chambers' Journal.

MAN LEAVES A MONUMENT FOR EARTH
TO HIDE.

MAN leaves a monument for earth to hide;
His generation and his name decays;
His footsteps vanish from the busy ways
Where life and death sit mocking side by side.
The warrior-kings who conquered far and wide,
Steeping in blood their perishable bays,
Now slumber with the dead of other days,
Their mighty bones to meanest dust allied.
"Peace! — babbling moralist! Thy words
are cast

Unnoticed on the world's tumultuous tide;
Man heeds no voice save passion's trumpet-
blast —

No ensign save the banner of his pride;
Lord of to-day, he holds the present fast,
He dares the future and derides the past!"

GEORGE MORINE.

THE nightingale has a lyre of gold,
The lark's is a clarion call,
And the blackbird plays but a boxwood flute,
But I love him the best of all.

For his song is all of the joy of life,
And we, in the mad spring weather,
We, too, have listened till he sang
Our hearts and lips together.

W. E. HENLEY.

From The Nineteenth Century.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH'S POEMS.

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH, not long before his lamented death, published in two volumes a new edition of his poetical works* — a welcome gift to many who had read in their youth, alike with delight and profit, the poems written by him in his youth, and a bequest which will be valued most by those who are attracted by the spiritual element in poetry when it is in no degree divorced from human sympathies. His religious poetry is of an order special to himself, and among contemporary "Anglican" poets he will probably be one day regarded by many as the best. Certainly there was no other that combined with a devout spirit so much not generally included in the term religious poetry; none who penetrated into so sound a vein of philosophical thought, or who derived his themes from such varied sources. To the minor, but not unimportant graces of poetry, such as metrical perfection, the labors of an ecclesiastical career probably allowed him to pay less attention than he would otherwise have bestowed on them, though they did not prevent him from continuing to write poetry in his maturer years, and write not less ably than in earlier days. His literary career began when the age occupied itself in an unusual degree with religion; and it was its first fruits that his poetic mind dedicated to spiritual themes. In his first volume, "The Story of Justin Martyr," the poems specially Christian are not only the more numerous, but are obviously those most entirely spontaneous. They are expressions of emotions as much as of thoughts — emotions that mated themselves with whatever met his eye as he moved through the classic lands illustrated in that volume.

One of the chief characteristics of Archbishop Trench's poetry is its intense seriousness — a seriousness which, even in his youthful poems, would evidently have been sadness but for that lustre thrown on his estimate of man's lot by the hope of a higher life. Apart from a "clothing from above" they must appar-

ently have worn for the poet a perpetual shadow — not one cast on them by the pessimism connected with the cynical spirit, but with sensibilities too keen for a world of chance and of change. Except when the sensibilities possess an elasticity equal to their intensity, the humanities take not only a sober but a sombre coloring. The shadow of the tomb rests on them, and the air around them is filled with warning voices. Poetry has its temperament as well as its spirit. The temperament of his poetry is melancholy and saturnine; its spirit, on the other hand, is buoyant. The result of this union is that the cheerfulness which belongs to his most characteristic poems is predominantly that of consolation. It is often, indeed, the sunbeam of the churchyard, and the bird-song echoed from the ruin. His poetry is essentially that of reality, and reality has its sad side. Byron, the gloomiest of modern poets, despite his bursts of wild mirth, calls Crabbe, though nature's darkest painter, "yet her best." Archbishop Trench's picture of life might have worn a graver sadness if his spiritual belief had not been as bright as Cowper's Calvinistic creed was depressing. The duty of poetry to be an inspirer of hope is insisted on in the "prefatory lines" prefixed to his earliest volume. It is hers, he asserts, to speak

Of light from darkness, good from evil brought
By an almighty power, and how all things,
If we will not refuse the good they bring,
Are messages of an almighty love,
And full of blessings. Oh! be sure of this —
All things are mercies while we count them
so;
And this believing, not keen poverty,
Nor wasting years of pain or slow disease,
Nor death, which in a moment might lay low
Our pleasant plants, — not these, if they should
come,
Shall ever drift our bark of faith ashore,
Whose steadfast anchor is securely cast
Within the veil, the veil of things unseen,
Which now we know not, but shall know here-
after.

The same conviction is expressed in the noble Spenserian stanzas which serve as an introduction to his second volume,*

* Poems. By Richard Chenevix Trench. New edition, 2 vols. London: Macmillan & Co. 1885.

* Sabbath, etc.

and affirm the kinship of poetry and faith.
They address the former :—

In my life's youth, while yet the deeper needs
Of the inmost spirit unawakened were,
Thou couldst recount of high heroic deeds,
Couldst add a glory unto earth and air,
A crowning glory, making fair more fair :
So that my soul was pleased and satisfied,
Which had as yet no higher, deeper care,
And said that thou shouldst evermore abide
With me, and make my bliss, and be my
spirit's bride.

But years went on, and thoughts which slept
before,
O'er the horizon of my soul arose—
Thoughts which perplexed me ever more
and more ;
As though a sphinx should meet one, and
propose
Enigmas hard, and which whoso not knows
To interpret, must her prey and victim be ;
And I, round whom thick darkness seemed
to close,
Knew only this one thing, that misery
Remained, if none could solve this riddle
unto me.

But when no longer without hope I mourned,
When peace and joy revived in me anew,
Even from that moment my old love re-
turned,
My former love, yet wiser and more true,
As seeing what for us thy power can do,
And what thy skill can make us understand
And know—and where that skill attained
not to ;
How far thou canst sustain us by thy hand,
And what things shall in us a holier care de-
mand.

Though now there seems one only worthy
aim
For Poet—that my strength were as my
will !—
And which renounce he cannot without
blame—
To make men feel the presence by his skill
Of an eternal loveliness, until
All souls are faint with longing for their
home,
Yet the same time are strengthened to ful-
fil
Their task on earth, that they may surely
come
Unto the land of life, who here as exiles roam.

If in this quest, O power of sacred song,
Thou canst assist—oh, never take thy
flight !

If thou canst make us gladder or more
strong,

If thou canst fling glimpses of glorious light
Upon life deepest depth and highest height,
Or pour upon its low and level plain

A gleam of mellow gladness, if this might
Thou hast (and it is thine), then not in vain
Are we henceforth prepared to follow in the
train.

Not long after the publication of his
first volume the poet learned that it had
imparted serious aid to several persons
who, when appalled by the "Sphinx's
enigmas," had not taken refuge in an igno-
ble indifference. Among them was one
of his college friends, the author of "The
Lawyer," who to the end continued faith-
ful both to his Christian convictions, and
to the principles as regards legal practice
sustained in that book and vindicated by
Lord Macaulay against Lord Brougham.

So far as Archbishop Trench's poetry
is to be placed in the class of religious
verse—though it was by no means con-
fined to that category—it is curious to
observe how different it is in character
from that of the Oxford poets, Keble and
Williams—the former of whom helped
so much to the creation of the High
Church school, while the poetical works
of the latter, and especially his "Baptist-
ery," possessed also high poetic merit,
and exercised a kindred influence. Dean
Milman belonged also to the University of
Oxford ; but his poetry represented an
earlier time, and related less to religious
themes. Archbishop Trench belonged to
Cambridge, not Oxford. In those days,
more than half a century gone by, the mar-
vellously ecclesiastical aspect presented
by Oxford was but a type of the spirit that
pervaded that "ancient and venerable
university," and had received an addi-
tional stimulus from the excitement occa-
sioned by Catholic emancipation. The
spirit of Cambridge was a different spirit ;
its most eminent representatives were not
patristic theologians ; they were men
more often famed for scientific acquire-
ments, such as Whewell, Airy, De Mor-
gan, and Sædewick ; or for high classical
scholarship, like the Hares. Among the

students were Alfred and Charles Tennyson, Arthur Hallam, Richard Monckton Milnes, W. Brookfield, John Kemble, Arthur Helps, Frederick Denison Maurice, and many besides — afterwards honored names. These men cared little for fathers or schoolmen, but a great deal for Wordsworth and Coleridge, Goethe and Schiller, Kant and Schelling. The "humanities" were more to them than scholastic lore, and metaphysical systems than theology. These were the men with whom the future archbishop chiefly associated; and though in his subsequent poetry a strong sympathy with High Church principles is to be found, yet the religious spirit of that poetry retained largely a character impressed upon it probably by earlier associations. It was pre-eminently human-hearted in its intellectual part, brooding and questioning, and occupied with interests extending over a wide range. In Jewish, Mahometan, and even pagan, legends he found a spiritual significance; while, in such poems as his "Lines written on a Picture of the Assumption by Murillo," he evinced a higher sympathy with the devotional mind of the Middle Ages than is to be found in the Oxford poets. His poetry remained always free from partisanship, and from that most unpoetical of all things, the polemical spirit.

To pass to his secular poetry. "The Prize of Song" is among the happiest specimens of his classical legends, and is so unlike his Christian legends as to mark in him a versatility rare in religious poets.

Challenged by the haughty daughters
Of the old Emathian King,
Strove the Muses at the waters
Of that Heliconian spring;
Proved beside those hallowed fountains
Unto whom the prize of song,
Unto whom those streams and mountains
Should of truest right belong.

First those others in vexed numbers
Mourned the rebel giant brood,
Whom the earth's huge mass encumbers,
Or who writhe, the vulture's food;
Mourned for earth-born power, which faileth
Heaven to win by might and main;
Then, thrust back, forever wailleth,
Gnawing its own heart in pain.

Nature shuddered while she hearkened,
Through her veins swift horror ran:
Sun and stars, perturbed and darkened,
To forsake their orbs began.
Back the rivers fled; the ocean
Howled upon a thousand shores,
As it would with wild commotion
Burst its everlasting doors.

Hushed was not that stormy riot,
Till were heard the sacred Nine
Singing of the blissful quiet
In the happy seats divine;
Singing of those thrones immortal,
Whither struggling men attain,
Passing humbly through the portal
Of obedience, toil, and pain.

At that melody symphonious
Joy to Nature's heart was sent,
And the spheres, again harmonious,
Made sweet thunder as they went:
Lightly moved, with pleasure dancing,
Little hills and mountains high,
Helicon his head advancing,
Till it almost touched the sky.

Thou whom once those sisters holy
On thy lonely path have met,
And, thy front thou stooping lowly,
There their sacred laurel set,
Oh be thine, their mandate owning,
Aye with them to win the prize,
Reconciling and atoning
With thy magic harmonies:

An Arion thou, whose singing
Rouses not a furious sea,
Rather the sea-monsters bringing
Servants to its melody;
An Amphion, not with passion
To set wild the builders' mind,
But the mystic walls to fashion,
And the stones in one to bind.

This poem is a real addition to the stores of English lyrical verse, elevated as it is in thought, and expressed in language though occasionally careless, yet more corresponding with the dignity of the theme than more elaborate diction would be. As a statement of what poetry should seek it is a Greek supplement to the stanzas on poetry previously quoted. Those stanzas affirm that poetry should ever rise in spiritual aspiration; "The Prize of Song" insists on the solidity which should belong to it no less. The spire should be lifted on the tower, not stand on the ground.

"Orpheus and the Sirens" is another fine specimen of the mode in which classical themes may be handled in a Christian spirit. It records the expedition of the *Argo* to Colchos in search of the golden fleece.

Nor Orpheus pass unnamed, though from the rest

Apart, he leaned upon that lyre divine,
Which once in heaven his glory should attest,
Set there, a sacred sign :

But when auspicious thunders pealed on high,
Unto its chords and to his chant sublime
The joyful heroes, toiling manfully,
With measured strokes kept time.

Then when that keel divided first the waves,
Them Chiron cheered from Pelion's piny
crown,

And wandering sea-nymphs rose from ocean
caves,

And all the gods looked down.

Their perils surmounted, the fleece won,
and their homeward journey nearly accomplished, the warriors are suddenly called on to encounter the greatest of their dangers. The Sirens' island lies before them; its fragrance is wafted over the waves, and with it the song inviting the sea-worn mariners to endless enjoyment exempt from all duties. The beach is whitened by the bones of those who have yielded to the seduction; but the warning is in vain, they steer inland. Suddenly Orpheus seizes his harp :—

Of holier joy he sang, more true delight,
In other happier isles for them reserved,
Who, faithful here, from constancy and right
And truth have never swerved;

How evermore the tempered ocean gales
Breathe round those hidden islands of the
blest,

Steeped in the glory spread, when daylight
fails

Far in the sacred West;

But of pure gladness found in temperance
high,

In duty owned, and revered with awe,
Of man's true freedom, which may only lie
In servitude to law;

And how 'twas given through virtue to aspire
To golden seats in ever-calm abodes;

Of mortal men, admitted to the quire
Of high immortal gods.

He sang—a mighty melody divine,
Waking deep echoes in the heart of each—
Reminded whence they drew their royal line,
And to what heights might reach.

The song triumphs, and the heroes
reach their home.

Among the Christian legends one of the best is entitled "The Monk and the Bird." The renunciation of all worldly ambitions and domestic ties has cost the monk nothing; his happiness increases as the years go by; for his mind finds rest in one thought—that of the "beatific vision" reserved for the just. At last a dreadful doubt assails him and, in spite of all his efforts to discard it, pursues him, alike amid the splendor of conventual offices, and when meditating in his cell. That doubt is whether the unvarying glory of that transcendent vision would not become one day a weariness to a mind such as man's. As he walks in sad musings he is attracted far on into a wood by the mystic singing of a bird.

He heard not, saw not, felt not aught beside,
Through the wide worlds of pleasure and of
pain,

Save the full flowing and the ample tide
Of that celestial strain.

He stands enthralled, as he supposes, for an hour, and then returns to his convent. The old faces fill it no more; three generations have passed. Later the new monks place him in his former cell, and thrice his early happiness is his once more. It is tempered by a single doubt,—

Lest an eternity should not suffice
To take the measure and the breadth and
height

Of what there is reserved in Paradise—
Its ever-new delight.

A note informs us that more than one German poet has dealt with this legend. In origin, however, it is not Teutonic. The late professor Eugene O'Curry, in his invaluable "Materials of Ancient Irish History," refers to a very early Irish manuscript in which it is extant.

Another legend, "Gertrude of Saxony," is, as stated in the note to the first edition, to be found in the eighth volume (p. 355) of the "Bibliotheca Ascetica"—a collection by Bernardus Pezsius of scarce religious tracts pertaining to the Middle Ages. It is characterized by that mixture of simplicity, sweetness, and unconscious grace which belongs to the best mediæval legends. St. Gertrude rides with a goodly company towards an Alsatian convent. As they traverse a vast and houseless plain the evening closes around them, and refuge there is none. Suddenly a palace of vast size and surpassing beauty stands before them. Its countless doors and windows lie wide open, and within are stored all things needful for human use; but inmates they see none.

But when they for a season waited had,
Behold! a matron of majestic air,
Of regal port, in regal garments clad,
Entered alone—who, when they would de-
clare

With reverence meet what need had brought
them there

At such untimely hour, smiling replied,
That she already was of all aware;

And added, she was pleased and satisfied
That they to be her guests that night had
turned aside.

And ere the meal she spread for then was
done,

Upon a sudden One there entered there
Whose countenance with marvellous beauty
shone,

More than the sons of men divinely fair,
And all whose presence did the likeness
wear

Of angel more than man: he too with bland
Mild words saluted them, and gracious air;
Sweet comfort, solemn awe, went hand in
hand,

While in his presence did those wondering
pilgrims stand.

Then turning to that matron, as a son
Might to his mother speak familiarly
He spake to her—they only heard the tone,
Not listening out of reverent courtesy:

In the morning the travellers pursue their
journey; when they have gone but a short
distance they turn to take a last look at
that palace. It is no longer to be seen;
and later they learn from the nobles of
that land that on that plain neither palace
nor house has ever existed.

Thereat from them did thankful utterance
break,

And with one voice they praised His tender
care

Who had upreared a palace for their sake,
And of that pomp and cost did nothing
spare

Though but to guard them from one night's
cold air,

And had no ministries of love disdained;
And 'twas their thought, if some have un-
aware

Angels for guests received with love un-
feigned,

That they had been by more than angels en-
tertained.

Archbishop Trench's poetry, however
freely it may deal with the ideal world,
yet never leaves reality far behind it.
The ordinary conditions of our mortal lot
may in it be transcended; but it is then
that the great spiritual truths which lie at
the base of human existence are most
effectually presented to us. He has—an
unusual charge—more of imagination

than of fancy, the latter faculty being less
often found in association with serious
thought and earnest purpose. The imag-
ination deals alike easily with elevated
themes and homely themes—what repels
it is the conventional; and the absence of
this in Archbishop Trench's poetry is one
of the proofs that his poetic vein is au-
thentic. That authenticity is indeed se-
verely tested by the extreme plainness of
its diction, which it must be owned is
sometimes carried to exaggeration. If it
rebukes poets who have an opposite fault,
those poets might retort that there exists
a degree of plainness which has about it
an ostentation of its own, and "tramples
on the pride of Plato with a greater pride."
Wordsworth once remarked laughingly of
a young poet whose diction he regarded as
too rich, that if "Crabbe's poetry and his
could be blended it would make excellent
bread and butter."

Though very many among Archbishop
Trench's best poems treat secular sub-
jects, the most characteristic are those on
religious—a circumstance which has per-
haps been injurious to their popularity.
Even among religious persons religion is
often regarded as a subject unfit for verse.
Except when strictly limited, that con-
demnation is surely a hasty one. No
doubt secular themes will always, and
justly, remain far the most numerous sub-
jects for poetry; but it may be true not
less that religious subjects are, in their
measure and degree, perfectly suitable
also; nay, true besides, that the theory
which disparages them inflicts a serious
injury, less on religion than on poetry,
ignoring its affinities to much that is great-
est in man, arbitrarily restricting its range,
and tempting both poet and reader to value
disproportionately its lesser functions, and
to ignore not only its spiritual capabilities,
but also its social and moral offices. That
theory is therefore one worthy of examina-
tion. It will be admitted at once that
there exist certain higher regions in theo-
logical science in which the reader cannot
be expected to breathe "the difficult air
of the iced mountain-top." It is equally
certain that there are doctrines, and also
facts, belonging to religion which, though
not too recondite, are too sacred for de-
tailed poetical illustration; and that even
well-intended attempts thus to illustrate
them have often had an alloy of over-fa-
miliarity, if not of coarseness, repulsive to
refined minds. But this means only that
religious themes have to be selected and
handled with discretion. A great poet
has told us that "Truth hath her pleasure-

grounds;" and religion has also her regions in which things divine and things human range freely together. These are the regions which the religious poet may best adventure upon; and even the pagan poets, though they sang of their gods, did not sing of the Eleusinian mysteries. In early Christian times there was a *disciplina arcani* for religious teachers; and religious poets will do well to respect a similar law. There is room enough for them outside its limit. Puritanism indeed attacks a religion larger than its own for not confining itself to the so-called "essential things;" but authentic religion is not a trim garden, but includes a world of mountain and dale — otherwise much in man's nature must have remained unconsecrated; and poetry, like painting, should avail itself of this largeness.

Congregational hymns, of course — at least those in modern languages — are seldom poetical. If they were largely so they would often be less fit for devotional purposes. Neither can even the success of Dryden, "the Bacon of the rhyming crew," as he is called by Landor, ever persuade us that religious controversy, such as his "Hind and Panther," gains by the controversialist choosing to do battle in singing robes; but there are abundant forms of poetry, as, for instance, the philosophical, to which the same objections do not apply. Philosophical poetry, when of a high order, has been often admired, even when the philosophy is of the materialistic — that is, of the least poetical order; and the Platonic philosophy is so essentially poetic that Milton, in a magnificent but little-known Latin poem, admirably translated by Leigh Hunt into the metre of the "Penseroso,"* adjures Plato, since he insists on banishing the poets from his ideal republic, to practise what he preaches, and himself to head the band of exiles. Can it then be maintained seriously that philosophy would cease to be a fit theme for poetry if it became Christian philosophy, that is, if the imaginative reason were to add to its stores, derived from meditation and from experience, those yet more luminous truths which have become man's heritage through revelation? Keats finely expressed what countless men must have felt when he said: "Beauty is truth; truth beauty;" is it to be believed that truth has no affinity with poetic beauty, except when that beauty is earth-born and returns to the dust; or that poetic beauty can have no

relations with truths which bear witness to the immortal and the infinite? There is little temptation to this narrowness. Is the rural and sylvan landscape abolished because it has a mountain boundary? On the contrary, its softness is enhanced by the contrast. Should the mountains include nothing above the limit-line of perpetual snow? On the contrary, it is above that line that we have, though not precipice and ravine, yet the richest color, the most exhilarating lights, and the most majestic outlines. Nature's world has many mansions, and so has that of art — a world not to be clipped by the dogmas of a criticism with vivid perceptions, but bark-bound sympathies.

Not less narrow is the allegation that poetry should confine itself exclusively to secular themes when it deals with narrative. The themes of the *Iliad* and the *Æneid* were well worthy of song, the former recording the fall of a guilty State, the latter the foundation of a great State by a royal exile; but the nobler of these epics had large dealings with the gods as well as with the heroes of old time. Were the "Paradise Lost" and "Jerusalem Delivered" unfortunate in their subjects? Few will affirm this. Those subjects had their imperfections and limitations, but so have all poetic subjects; and if the battle of angels is above the limit of poetic art, the catalogue of the ships is beneath it. Heroism is heroism no less if the city besieged be the city of David, not the city of Priam; and if the heroism of Greece was naturally excited by a desire to wipe out the opprobrium cast upon it by the flight of Helen, a true poet might see something as calculated to stimulate the chivalry of Christendom in a war waged to replace the cross on the churches of Jerusalem and to deliver Christian captives from Mahometan dungeons. The whole range of human action and passion, whether directed to evil or good ends, lay open to the Christian narrative poet as well as to the pagan; the Paladins of Charlemagne were as brave as the Greek chiefs; and the affianced wife of Roland, who died on hearing of his death, was as loyal-hearted as Andromache.

The difference between the religious and the non-religious theme is often that the former includes all the conditions and resources of poetry to be found in the latter, and adds to them others besides. It comprises a special range of human affections not found elsewhere. It exhibits, in addition to all that belongs to mere human nature, many ascending grades of

* It is entitled "Plato's Archetypal Man."

moral nobleness; and for the most part the more advanced the character is in spirituality, the profounder, though not the more absorbing, is that human tenderness which can only reach its full development through the extinction of self-love. It is in the Christian types of character alone that we witness those graduated lights and shades produced by the blending influences of nature and of grace. Have they no significance? Let us turn to such creations as Chaucer's St. Cecilia, Griseldel, and Constance, or to Spenser's loveliest characters. Was Una, who devoted her life to the restoration of her deposed parents, deficient in human affections because she had affections higher still? Had she no love for the champion who had undertaken her cause and then suspected and deserted her? Was it insensibility which induced her to bring him to the "House of Holiness" and restore him to virtue and honor? Were Spenser's bandit chiefs less naturally described because they stood in contrast with Christian warriors leal and true? Characters of a high spiritual order are the flowers of the tree, and their fragrance is not destroyed, but is the more delicate, because they wave in a higher air.

It is sometimes alleged that saintly characters are too like each other for poetic illustration. This is *a priori* judgment, not fact. Even a careless reader must have observed how strikingly distinct are the most saintly characters in the New Testament, notwithstanding all that they have in common. This unlikeness is remarkable in authentic religious biographies. The saint of contemplation is essentially different from the saint of penitence, or of apostolic zeal, or of humble laboriousness. It is with characters as with faces: on a first acquaintance we sometimes hardly know one member of a family from another, for the family type is all that has caught our attention; by degrees we grow to observe the individual traits, and then we marvel how we ever saw any other. In poetry, whether the characters illustrated are ordinary men or saints, we discriminate only where we have grown intimate. To a boy the warriors of Homer seem much alike because they are all courageous; but a thoughtful reader perceives that in each hero courage is a different virtue from what it is in others, not to speak of qualities blended with that of courage. Among the wise there are many different sorts of wisdom, and among the virtuous many types of virtue. If to the merely

secular intelligence all saints look alike, it may be that to saints all the worldly look alike; but in both cases a mistake is made; and poetry is not called on to renounce the larger delineation of human character in deference to mistakes.

The drama, it should be owned, is an exception to these remarks. A saintly character may be introduced into a play, as in the instance of Massinger's "Virgin Martyr," and the main drift of a drama may embody an elevated moral teaching, as it commonly does in Shakespeare's tragedies; but the drama is so much occupied by the collisions of violent passions, that although Aristotle claimed for Greek tragedy the special function of purifying the heart through the influences of pity and terror, our own must be regarded as that department of poetry the sphere of which lies farthest apart from that of religion. For this, however, lyrical poetry makes ample amends. In it poetry mounts on wings, and her heavenward flights have frequently been amongst her noblest, whether as regards strength or grace. It has proved so both in ancient times and modern. The Psalms have been read far more frequently than any other part of Holy Scripture, except the Canticles, and a few other passages of the New Testament; and the highest classical and Oriental literature abounds in religious odes often the most vigorous and apparently spontaneous expression of the antique imagination, as well as the most precious memorial of national traditions. If any part of ancient poetry sprang directly from the heart of the people it was this. The Latin hymns of the early Church were the delight not only of the ages that produced them, but of later times; they were the last poems that soothed the death-bed of Walter Scott. Petrarch's religious poetry came as plainly from his heart as his love sonnets. Spenser's hymns on "Heavenly Love" and "Heavenly Beauty" rank with his noblest and most characteristic poems. The works of Herbert and Crashaw abound in lyrics equal to the best of the age they belong to; and the Elizabethan era bequeathed to us a large mass of true poetry, alike intellectual and imaginative, on religious themes—the works especially of the Beaumonts, Habington, Daniel, Southwell, and Dr. Henry More. The best of Drummond's touching sonnets are religious. Milton's magnificent Christmas hymn makes us lament that he did not resume at a later period that sister song on the Passion which he laid aside, as he has

touchingly recorded, from an impression that his years were not yet sufficiently mature to cope with a theme so high.

It has been the same in recent times. Wordsworth's finest poem is that which elects for its theme the immortality of man —

Trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.

Coleridge's hymn, "Mont Blanc," is perhaps the grandest of his poems, though not the most characteristic. Shelley's most spiritual, earnest, and beautiful lyric is his "Hymn to Intellectual Beauty," rightly so called, since it embodies what was nearest to religious thought attained to by him, and therefore includes what is perhaps the only expression of humility in his works —

Whom, Spirit fair, thy spells did bind
To *fear himself*, and love all human kind.

Byron's "Hebrew Melodies" rank high among his lyrics; and among his other most poetical passages are some few which, without ostentation, indicate at least occasional visitations of strong though vague religious feeling. Those parts of his poems which scoff at religion, like others of a cynical character, are invariably unpoetical. In the other countries of Europe, religious poetry has fully equalled in poetic merit the highest specimens of secular. In Italy it has surpassed them; and, as Kenelm Digby remarks, if the highest place among poets must be assigned to Shakespeare, the highest among single poems would probably by good judges be accorded to Dante's "Divina Commedia." Nor is it little remarkable that in that pre-eminently religious work the two latter portions — viz. the "Purgatorio" and the "Paradiso" — are immeasurably more poetical than the "Inferno," notwithstanding that the last-named concerns itself so much more with secular interests, and challenges attention by several well-known passages of exceptional power. The "Purgatorio" and "Paradiso," indeed, are not only richer than it in imagination and intellect, but also in pathos and tenderness; witness the meeting of the poet with his remote ancestor, Cacciaguida. In Spanish literature the greatest poet, Calderon, is also the most religious; and in his own day his most popular works were those "Autos Sacramentales" so rapturously praised by Augustus Schlegel and by Shelley. The admirable translations of them by Denis Florence McCarthy enable the English

reader to form his own judgment on their merits; as do also some fine fragments by Archbishop Trench. It is thus that he expresses his opinion of Calderon's "Autos:" —

He [the reader] will be filled, I fear not to say, with an endless admiration and astonishment at the skill of the poet in conquering the almost unconquerable difficulties of his theme, at the power with which he masters and moulds the most heterogeneous materials. . . . Add to these merits the gorgeous poetic diction, wherein he clothes the flights of an imagination for which nothing is too bold, which dares to reach all worlds; while, most wonderful triumph of all, he is able to impart even a dramatic interest to that which, whatever other merits it might acquire in its treatment, might have seemed in its very nature incapable of this merit. . . . It is not too much to say of the larger number of these marvellous works that they are hymns of loftiest praise to Redeeming Love, summonses to all things which have breath to praise the Lord; and he too writes as one who has seen Satan fall as lightning from heaven, and rejoices in spirit with his Lord.*

Such criticism, as well as the archbishop's remarks on Dante, carry with them more weight as regards religious poetry than *negative* objections amounting but to this — that it is not that form of poetry which has an interest for the objector. Many persons delight in the drama who dislike lyrical poetry; and others are admirable judges of painting who possess no taste for sculpture.

The religious poetry of Archbishop Trench may be referred to several different classes — such as the narrative, the allegoric, and the meditative. The last named finds perhaps its best expression in his sonnets, a form of composition which adds to the force of thoughtful poetry by the condensation which its structure requires, and imparts majesty by the unity which it insists on. Here is a specimen: —

What good soever in thy heart or mind
Doth yet no higher source nor fountain own
Than thine own self, nor bow to other throne,
Suspect and fear; although therein thou find
High purpose to go forth and bless thy kind,
Or in the awful temple of thy soul
To worship what is loveliest, and control
The ill within, and by strong laws to bind.
Good is of God — no good is therefore sure,
Which has dared wander from its source
away:
Laws without sanction will not long endure,
Love will grow faint and fainter day by day,

* Calderon: an Essay on his Life and Genius, pp. 93, 100. London: Macmillan, 1880.

And Beauty from the straight path will allure,
And weakening first, will afterwards betray.

This "Good Counsel" is often needed most by the most soaring natures — natures high in aspirations, but ignorant how close to strength weakness often lurks. A poet tells us that

By our own spirits we are deified.

The pride latent in some poetic natures might be termed the "artist pride," and meets a searching and profound warning in Tennyson's "Palace of Art."

Here is another sonnet which, once read, leaves much behind : —

Thou' cam'st not to thy place by accident,
It is the very place God meant for thee;
And shouldst thou there small scope for action
see,

Do not for this give way to discontent;
Nor let the time thou owest to God be spent
In idly dreaming how thou mightest be,
In what concerns thy spiritual life, more free
From outward hindrance or impediment.
For presently this hindrance thou shalt find
That without which all goodness were a task
So slight, that virtue never would grow strong:
And wouldst thou do one duty to his mind,
The Imposer's — over-burdened thou shalt
ask,

And own the need of grace to help, ere long.

Ours is an age of activities so thick-crowding, and that often by necessity as well as choice, that even activities of a religious order shake a good deal of dust over the moral being, and leave so little time for contemplation that the relish for it dies, and the time left seems superfluous. It might profit by the following suggestion : —

A wretched thing it were, to have our heart
Like a thronged highway or a populous street
Where every idle thought has leave to meet,
Pause, or pass on as in an open mart;
Or like some roadside pool, which no nice art
Has guarded that the cattle may not beat
And foul it with a multitude of feet,
Till of the heavens it can give back no part.
But keep thou thine a holy solitude,
For He who would walk there would walk
alone;

He who would drink there, must be first
endued

With single right to call that stream his own;
Keep thou thine heart, close-fastened, unre-
vealed,

A fenced garden and a fountain sealed.

Among the schools of English theology in old days there was one sometimes called the "Platonic," which counted among its representatives such men as "silver-tongued Smith," Dr. Henry More, and Cudworth, one of the chief English

exponents of ancient philosophy. They would have welcomed many of Archbishop Trench's poems, the following for example : —

To feel that we are homeless exiles here,
To listen to the world's discordant tone,
As to a private discord of our own,
To know that we are fallen from a sphere
Of higher being, pure, serene, and clear,
Into the darkness of this dim estate —
This thought may sometimes make us deso-
late,

For this we may shed many a secret tear.
But to mistake our dungeon for a throne,
Our place of exile for our native land,
To hear no discords in the universe,
To find no matter over which to groan,
This (oh! that men would rightly understand!)
This, seeming better, were indeed far worse.

Here is a sonnet which will remind many a wayfarer of one of man's least selfish regrets : —

To leave unseen so many a glorious sight,
To leave so many lands unvisited,
To leave so many worthiest books unread,
Unrealized so many visions bright;
Oh! wretched yet inevitable spite
Of our brief span, that we must yield our
breath,

And wrap us in the unfeeling coil of death,
So much remaining of unproved delight.
But hush, my soul, and vain regrets, be
stilled;

Find rest in Him who is the complement
Of whatso'er transcends our mortal doom,
Of baffled hope and unfulfilled intent:
In the clear vision and aspect of whom
All longings and all hopes shall be fulfilled.

The following has a significance equal to its pathos, although not expressed in its fifth and sixth lines with its author's usual clearness : —

TO SILVIO PELLICO.

(On reading the story of his imprisonment.)

Songs of deliverance compassed thee about,
Long ere thy prison doors were backward
flung;

When first thy heart to gentle thoughts was
strung,

A song arose in heaven, an angel shout
For one delivered from the hideous rout,
Who with defiance and fierce mutual hate
Do each the other's griefs exasperate.

Thou, loving, from thy grief hadst taken out
Its worst — for who is captive or a slave
But he, who from that dungeon and foul grave,
His own dark soul, refuses to come forth
Into the light and liberty above?

Or whom may we call wretched on this earth
Save only him who has left off to love?

It is unfortunate that the name of the poet addressed in the following sonnet is not prefixed to it. It is a noble assertion

of the many functions assigned to the
high poet:—

A counsellor well fitted to advise
In daily life, and at whose lips no less
Men may inquire, or nations, when distress
Of sudden doubtful danger may arise,
Who, though his head be hidden in the skies,
Plants his firm foot upon our common earth,
Dealing with thoughts which everywhere have
birth—

This is the poet, true of heart and wise:
No dweller in a baseless world of dream,
Which is not earth or heaven: his words have
past

Into man's common thought and week-day
phrase;

This is the poet, and his verse will last.
Such was our Shakespeare once, and such
doth seem

One who redeems our later gloomier days.

Next to religion, patriotism is perhaps
the strongest inspirer of Archbishop
Trench's poetry. Amid the fairest scenes
of southern climes he asserts that

We shall not need in quest of these to roam,
While sunshine lies upon our English grass,
And dewdrops glitter on green fields at home.

And while lamenting all that the traveller
has to leave unseen at Rome, he still is

Glad in the hope to tread the soil again
Of England, where our place of duty lies.

It is thus that he greets what he claims as
the first sight of England:—

GIBRALTAR.

England, we love thee better than we know—
And this I learned, when after wanderings
long

'Mid people of another stock and tongue,
I heard again thy martial music blow,
And saw thy gallant children to and fro
Pace, keeping ward at one of those huge
gates,

Twin giants watching the Herculean Straits.
When first I came in sight of that brave show,
It made my very heart within me dance,
To think that thou thy proud foot should ad-
vance

Forward so far into the mighty sea;
Joy was it and exultation to behold
Thine ancient standard's rich emblazonry,
A glorious picture by the wind unrolled.

The poet vindicates thus his love for
his country—a country in which he sees
perpetually united those two sister islands
which certain "light-hearted" politicians
would separate, but on which as on a fixed
centre rests an empire world-wide, with
the prosperity of which that of all civilized
lands is identified:—

Peace, Freedom, Happiness, have loved to
wait

On the fair islands, fenced by circling seas;
And ever of such favored spots as these
Have the wise dreamers dreamed, who would
create

That perfect model of a happy state,
Which the world never saw. Oceana,
Utopia such, and Plato's isle that lay
Westward of Gades and the Great Sea's gate.
Dreams are they all, which yet have helped
to make

That underneath fair polities we dwell,
Though marred in part by envy, faction,
hate—

Dreams which are dear, dear England, for thy
sake,

Who art indeed that sea-girt citadel,
And nearest image of that perfect state.

At all the later periods of his life the
poems of this Irish poet continued to be
marked by the same profound love of
England, as, for instance, those written
during the Russian War.

There are some persons who dislike, or
are indifferent to, the expression of the
patriotic sentiment in poetry, stigmatizing
it as "political poetry"—an objection
which would have deprived us of Milton's
greatest sonnets, and not a few of the
chief lyrics in existence. Under the name
of patriotic poetry of course a good deal
of stupid sedition has been written, but it
has almost always proved to be bad as
poetry, and not more noxious than an
equal quantity of incendiary prose would
have been. But the true love of country
differs from the false as much as true
religion differs from the follies that claim
its name; and if it be excommunicated
from the realm of poetry, the same conse-
quence follows as when religion has been
thus excommunicated—that is to say,
poetry itself is the chief sufferer. The
religious and the patriotic sentiments are
two of the largest, the most disinterested,
and the most self-sacrificing known to man.
Both may lie doubtless at the heart of
poetry when they do not rise to the sur-
face, for the life-blood is not always shown
either in the flushed cheek or in the
wound; but the poetry which purposely
excludes these sources of inspiration will
be tempted to throw itself upon inferior
ones—on frivolities, on epicurean enjoy-
ments, or on sensational incidents hunted
up out of odd corners, not found on the
broad highways of human life. A few
remarks on the patriotic may fitly supple-
ment those already made on the religious
sentiment in its relations with poetry.

One of the most honorable characteris-
tics of that great outburst of English

poetry in the nineteenth century is the manifest sincerity with which it gave utterance to love of country. It had, though in a lesser degree, done so at that earlier outburst of the sixteenth century. Shakespeare's marvellous series of historic plays, from which Sir Robert Walpole confessed that he had learned whatever he knew of England's earlier annals, suggest that the famous death-bed speech of John of Gaunt was but the expression of that patriotic passion which had ever burned in the poet's heart. Doubtless it was also in a large part the love of country which moved Spenser to seek in England's Arthur the hero of his "Faerie Queene;" but unhappily in that age a genuine patriotism — which must ever sympathize tenderly with the people, though not with the populace, while it is loyal to the sovereign — was half smothered in the idolatry felt, not by courtiers only, but by many literary aspirants, for Queen Elizabeth. The patriotism of a country that worships despotism, especially a novel despotism like that of the Tudors, is a patriotism founded largely on national vanity, as we learn from the *grande nation* of Louis the Fourteenth's time; and national vanity is not, like a true love of country, an inspirer of high poetry. The patriotic sentiment in England had made progress in proportion as a freedom grounded on law and in harmony with order had made progress; it had become matured during the vicissitudes of a long and perilous war, waged not to enslave feeble nations, but to vindicate the freedom of all from the aggressions of Buonaparte, the child and embodiment of the French Revolution; and when the righteous cause had triumphed, a larger element of patriotism than English literature had ever known before manifested itself in that poetry which had accompanied the struggle and gained animation from the victory. Scott found his best themes in the history of his country; and it was not in the spirit of rancor, but of mutual respect, that the children of lands once foes fought again in his verse the fields of Bannockburn and Flodden. Burns had written a little earlier, and if his poems are still recited, alike amid the Highlands and the shrewder Lowlands, it is because the image of his country is to be found in them. As strong a patriotic sentiment broke out in Campbell's great naval odes, and in spite of his "Lochiel's Warning" it was one not restricted to the northern part of the island. Wordsworth, in his "Sonnet dedicated to Liberty," cheered England on through the vicissitudes of a

struggle such as she had never known in the days of her Henries and Edwards. Coleridge's "Fears in Solitude," exquisitely expressed, when invasion was expected, a poet's solicitude for those sufferings which fall on the helpless and the aged, when their prayer is "that their flight be not in the winter;" while in his "Ode to the Departing Year," amid passages of admiring love, he mingled as fearless denunciations of his country's sins, especially in connection with the slave trade —

But chief by Afric's wrongs,
Strange, horrible, and foul.

In two of Southey's lyrical poems his genius rose, under the stimulus of patriotic emotion, to a height never by him reached elsewhere. One of these is his "Ode written during the Negotiations with Buonaparte in January, 1814," —

Who counsels peace at this momentous hour,
and the other is his "Funeral Song for the Princess Charlotte." In the latter, the poet follows the funeral procession while it advances along St. George's Chapel; and the old tombs, as he passes them, bleed again with sad memories of the chief passages in English history from the Wars of the Roses to the war with Napoleon. Among the greater poets of modern times Byron and Goethe seem to have been those the least marked by strong love of country, perhaps because among those most self-engrossed. Several of Browning's poems are vigorous illustrations of English history. Keats had love to spare besides that which spent itself on Greek mythology; among his aspirations here is one: —

In the long vista of the years to come,
Let me not see my country's glory fade.

Tennyson, while the most ideal and imaginative of our living poets, has also in numberless ways proved himself pre-eminently a national one. He has written a great cycle of "Idyls" on England's mythic king; and many more illustrating with matchless skill the modern life of England not only among the poor, but also in that higher class, which, from the degree in which it is colored by conventionalities, admits least easily of poetic delineation. He has recorded countless incidents of English life, legendary or historical, from Cophetua and Godiva to "The Revenge" and "The Defence of Lucknow." He has added three to the roll of English historical plays. He has

vividly illustrated many of those modes of thought, feeling, and action which characterize modern England, and not a few of her social conditions, alike in their good and in their evil. He has sung the cottage, the manor-house, the throne,

Broad-based upon her people's will,
And compassed by the inviolate sea.

He has flattered no class prejudices, aristocratic or democratic; and he has asserted the true principles of national greatness and stability in those two majestic poems, "You ask me why, though ill at ease," and "Of old sat Freedom on the heights," on reading which a statesman,* who was also ardently attached to letters and widely acquainted with them, exclaimed, "They are as stately as those two temples which stand side by side on that plain near Pæstum!"

In ancient times no less the true poets loved their country.

The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle,

when the villagers gathered round him as he chaunted his rhapsodies on the seashore, embraced the whole race of Greece, whether on the mainland, her islands, or her colonial dependencies, in a common affection. We cannot doubt that in his imagination he saw the eyes of the listeners flash as they heard the deeds of their fathers recited, and that he received from their ready sympathy no small portion of his own inspiration. Virgil sang the Trojan hero to whom Rome owed her existence. Horace, though his themes were sometimes below him, yet in the most impassioned and pathetic of his odes gave expression to the despair with which in his youth he had bewailed the defeat of Pompey at Pharsalia, and the destruction of the Roman republic; and in his later life he dedicated his most important lyrics to the enforcement of those solid ethical principles through which alone the empire could become great; while he fearlessly reproved his fellow-countrymen for their luxury, their factiousness, and their neglect of the household ties. The great poets of Italy and Spain, like Schiller and other poets in modern Germany, were each of them devoted to his native land — her greatness in the past, and her freedom and peace in the present.

In this fellowship of patriotism and poetry there is nothing extraordinary. Patriotism, while a moral, is also largely an imaginative passion. If it is to bring

forth worthy fruit it must become more than this, wedding itself with reason and walking in the ways of duty; but without imagination a man can hardly even take in the idea of country and of nation. He has no difficulty in appreciating the claims of a clan, which is but a family expanded, or of sympathizing with a class whose well-being is identified with his own; but the idea of a nation is a vaster thing than these, and he who grasps it has to blend in a single conception countless thoughts and associations that come to him from remote tracts and distant periods. A nation is a unity which includes a vast plurality, many members with diverse functions, and yet a common life and common interest. It comprises whole races which in early days strove against each other on many a battlefield, yet whose remoter descendants were destined, through geographical or other necessities, to become amalgamated. Looking back on history the thoughtful patriot discerns not merely its accidental confusion, but under them a latent meaning and a providential purpose. Petty resentments then give place to a sounder love of country, and the lesson of history is peace. How otherwise could a common country exist for the children of Provence and of Brittany, or for those of Austria and Hungary? The true patriot remembers the past and its wrongs, where wrongs have existed, to learn the lesson they bequeath and pay a reverent tribute to the suffering heroism of ancient days, not to forge bolts of vengeance when there is no longer a head upon which they can justly fall. True patriotic love is not a vindictive passion, it is a magnanimous one; it is not a vainglorious assumption that a single nation has absorbed all the virtues, and that all other nations consist of "barbarians," as the Greeks, or of *hostes*, as the Romans, called them. It is not an aggressive impulse; on the contrary, the aspiration of the patriot is that his country should be justly looked up to as the teacher and sustainer of virtuous civilization in all lands. Patriotism is not a blind affection; it sees clearly the faults of the country loved, and cares little for its praise and much for the fulfilment of its highest vocation. It is not self-love dilated, but the extinction of self-love in an affection the largest known to man, except that inspired by religion. The love of country blends the loyal devotedness of filial love with the discrimination, often painful, of love parental; and yet that love, far from obliterating, quickens in him who feels it the love which he owes

* The late Lord Monteagle.

to his neighbor, and the reverence due to total humanity. There is a mystery in all affections which rise above vulgar instincts; it is thus with the love of country — a love unintelligible to many who claim its exclusive possession. The patriot sees in her more than can be seen by those who are without; and yet he remembers that there remains in her much that cannot meet his eye; for it is part of the greatness of a nation that, though her fields and cities are visible things, her highest greatness and most sacred claims lie beyond these, and belong in part, like whatever includes a spiritual element, to the sphere of "things not seen." Towards such an insight, as regards nation and country, the imagination, like man's other faculties, contributes its part, thus elevating patriotism, which sinks otherwise, like other blind affections, to the low level of unreasonable and illicit passions, and passes thence on to extinction. It is therefore not surprising that the old Greek who knew everything should have noted in the "poet of a nation" the patriot as well as the seer, and in both capacities "a counsellor well fitted to advise." If that Greek had lived later, and become a believer, he would have remained a patriot. He would have said: "A nation comes next in dignity to the Christian Church; and it was in some sort a type of her."

To return to Archbishop Trench. His secular poems are drawn from very various sources.

At the close of the second volume we find a series entitled "Elegiac Poems," replete with a deep pathos; and elsewhere are numerous pieces based on the human affections and social ties. Some of the best are a combination of natural description and of reflection. . . . As happy specimens of this class we may name "An Evening in France" * and "The Descent of the Rhone." † Other poems combine occurrences with meditations, as for instance "An Incident Versified" ‡ and "On an Early Death." § Some embody old legends of many countries, such as "A Legend of Alhambra," || "Sais," ¶ "Sabbation," a Jewish legend, ** "The Oil of Mercy," †† "The Tree of Life," ‡‡ "Timoleon," §§ "Alexander at the Gates of Paradise, a Legend from the Talmud," ||| "The Breaker of Idols." ¶¶ We have

tales from the Persian and ballads of Haroun Al Raschid, and many besides, including "Genoveva" and "The Steadfast Prince." Here is a specimen of a style different from that in which he commonly wrote. It is extracted from a poem entitled an "Ode to Sleep:" —

I cannot follow thy departing track,
Nor tell in what far meadows, gentle Sleep,
Thou art delaying. I would win thee back,
Were mine some drowsy potion, or dull spell,
Or charmed girdle, mighty to compel
Thy heavy grace, for I have heard it said,
Thou art no flatterer, that dost only keep
In kingly haunts, leaving unvisited
The poor man's lowlier shed;
And when the day is joyless, and its task
Unprofitable, I were fain to ask,
Why thou wilt give it such an ample space,
Why thou wilt leave us such a weary scope
For memory, and for that which men call
 hope,
Nor wind in one embrace
Sad eve and night forlorn
And undelightful morn.

And therefore am I seeking to entwine
A coronal of poppies for my head,
Or wreath it with a wreath engarlanded
By Lethe's slumberous waters. Oh! that
 mine
Were some dim chamber turning to the north,
With latticed casement bedded deep in leaves,
That opening with sweet murmur might look
 forth
On quiet fields from broad o'erhanging eaves;
And ever when the spring her garland weaves,
Were darkened with encroaching ivy-trail
And jagged vine-leaves' shade;
And all its pavement starred with blossoms
 pale
Of jasmine, when the wind's least stir was
 made;
Where the sunbeam was verdurous-cool, be-
 fore
It wound into that quiet nook, to paint
With interspace of light and color faint
That tessellated floor.

This is a youthful poem, and, with a more popular if the *musæ severiores* few others like it, shows how easily the author might have succeeded in a style had not drawn him by preference to the poetry of graver thoughts. Later he was by necessity much drawn away from poetry by his official duties, and also by the composition of his numerous prose works, as Southey was drawn away from poetry by his historical works and Coleridge by metaphysics, before either had more than indicated what he might otherwise have accomplished. Mere drudgery is a less formidable competitor with poetry than higher things; a clerkship in a bank is

* Vol. i., p. 51.
† Vol. i., p. 54.
‡ Vol. i., p. 86.
§ Vol. i., p. 143.
|| Vol. i., p. 78.
¶ Vol. i., p. 132.

** Vol. i., p. 147.
†† Vol. ii., p. 17.
‡‡ Vol. ii., p. 21.
§§ Vol. ii., p. 65.
||| Vol. ii., p. 73.
¶¶ Vol. ii., p. 87.

unseductive to genius; but theology, history, and philosophy have sufficient kinship with poetry to provide another investment for the faculty and another satisfaction for the craving.

AUBREY DE VERE.

From The English Illustrated Magazine.
LIL: A LIVERPOOL CHILD.

BY AGNES C. MAITLAND.

"All, I could never be
All men ignored in me.
This is worth to God—whose wheel the pitcher
shaped."

R. BROWNING.

CHAPTER I.

SHE was standing in the midst of a group of companions at their favorite corner under the lamp-post on the greasy pavement, just where a narrow, dark court opened on to the narrow street. A puny, undersized child of thirteen—untidy, ragged, and bare-headed—for the moment she was the centre of interest and attraction, and her voice rang shrilly out across the street, while her dark eyes flashed in the lamplight.

"I'll not be nobody's white slave," she cried; "I'll not bear it. He hadn't no right to put her over me, he hadn't. He thinks I'll put up with it, does he? I'll soon show him!"

"That's right, Lil!"

"Stand up for yourself, gal! Stand up for yourself!"

"Don't be put upon—I wouldn't!"

"Lil ain't no softy. She'll not be tramped on."

"Go it, Lil! Go it!"

Some of the group were sympathizing, but most of the elders were more than half mocking at her fury.

"You know what I done for him—you 'Lizer, an' you, Em'ly," she continued passionately, appealing from the multitude to individuals. "Worked and slaved, an' kep' things as I could, and got 'im his dinner reg'lar, an' fetched 'im 'ome from the public nights, an' now he serves me o' this!"

"It's a shame—it is a bloomin' shame!" answered 'Lizer soothingly. "Drat 'em all, Lil. Don't you care."

"Our Anna's last place," observed one girl somewhat outside the group, "the master took an' married again, an' his gell—she was missus till then, yer see—she up an' give it him well, an' turned out and did for herself. But there—she was a

just hand at the millinery, an' a heap older than Lil."

"What'll yer do, Lil?" questioned one of the elders. "Yer've got no trade at all. Now, if yer was like me ye'd go to business, get lodgin's, an' keep yerself. I wouldn't live at home—no, not for nobody."

"Nor me neither! Nor me!" echoed two or three more; for though most in the group were under seventeen, fully half were "doing for themselves," working at the card-box making, or at upholstering, or at horse hair weaving—a poor trade that last in these days—or at rope and string factories, or at "the feathering," or at cigar-making. There were no "basket-girls" among them. These girls were "a cut above that"—as they themselves would have said. They lived in lodgings, perhaps two or three together, on their own earnings, proud of their independence; but what lodgings and what living! Small wonder that the lingering daylight and the gas-lamp, as it flickered and wavered in the damp wind, showed pale faces and puny, undeveloped figures. Here and there was a girl of a better mould, taller and more strongly made, but though the framework might be good, it was only a framework, and had never been filled out. The best-looking were those that lived at home. There was a startling precocity—nay, rather a look of age—on some of the young faces; one or two were dully sullen, others half cunning and half bold, but all were alike in one particular; over every forehead, without exception, covering even the eyebrows in most cases, hung a "bang," a heavy, untidy straight mass of hair, more like a damp that than a fringe.

"I'll not stop at home, any way, if I starve for it," cried Lil. "I'll let him see that! She'll not get me to work for her an' her brat, an' slave myself that she may be a fine madam!"

"Yer might as well go to service as that," cried 'Lizer scoffingly, "yer might indeed;" and a loud laugh of scorn rang out from the girls, for "service" as a means of earning your livelihood was held in open contempt by most of them as utterly unworthy of any girl with a spirit.

But the story of Lil's wrongs was already palling upon her public. The clock had struck some five minutes ago, and the sound of a steady—though as yet distant—tramp of many feet began to make itself heard. It was the men and boys turning out of the dockyards and works at the bottom of the long street that led to

the docks and the river, and coming up towards their homes.

The girls grew restless at the sound; first one and then another moved off. Most of them had a friend, a chum, or pal, to meet, or if not they wished to join the noisy chaff and rough play that was sure to be set a-going somewhere when the lads turned out. Some of these friendships were but the ignorant, innocent likings of boy and girl, and some — alas! — were not; but only too often the girl child's innocence had been lost before she knew what it was, and not by her own fault.

Lil had no such friends. In a few minutes she was left alone, her passion still raging hotly within her. One or two of the girls cried out to her to "come along," but she shook her head sullenly and stood still, fiercely twisting her chilly, numbed fingers in and out the rags in the front of her dress, and beating one foot on the pavement.

After a few minutes she turned away and walked a little bit along the street. It was very dark and she was growing colder and colder. A sudden sense of utter desolation came over her. "They don't care! Nobody cares!" she cried bitterly, and then all in a moment her fury seemed to die out of her. She stopped in her aimless, hurried walk, clutched at the railings of the nearest cellar, and leaning on them, burst into a passion of tears and sobs, self-pitying tears, that nevertheless relieved her. The street was empty, most doors were shut to keep out the damp fog from the river. At the all-sorts shop at the corner a few women with dirty shawls over their heads were gossiping while they did their marketing; further on a brighter light and an illuminated barrel of colored glass showed the public house, but it was too early for them to be very busy there as yet. No one came Lil's way; the child had her cry out undisturbed, and it did her good.

Yet, though she was exhausted both with want of food and with her own passions, hardly were her tears spent before hot anger broke out in her again; but against herself this time.

"Oh, what a fool — a fool to cry!" she exclaimed bitterly. "To think as I should have cried for that! It makes me mad with myself, it does. Why, I ain't cried — not since I can't remember when! Not since I left school an' mother died, any way!"

Poor Lil! Two years ago she had been a board-school scholar — a fifth-standard girl — and only some among us can know

what an extensive range of knowledge that is supposed to imply. Her home had been in no way remarkable; to the outside observer it was just like any other of a hundred homes in the neighborhood, except that it contained only one child — herself — instead of half a dozen. Her father was a dock laborer, sometimes earning good wages for a few weeks together, then for as many weeks more getting no work at all, or only a day now and again, or even it might be but a half or a quarter day, and always spending more than two-thirds of his yearly earnings on the two items of rent and drink, which both went on much the same, whether he was in work or out. Yet he was not a bad father, nor yet a drunkard — far from it. Her mother had been a factory girl before she married, and at her marriage knew less about keeping a house as it should be kept than one could easily have believed possible for a full-grown human being in a civilized land. Though she started in life with the best intentions, ignorance first, and then the ghastly uncertainty as to work and wages that overhung every hour of their existence, soon broke down and destroyed her hopes of keeping a "nice little 'ome." She could take her glass, too, as well as her husband, and before Lil was five the two or three bits of good furniture they had possessed were pawned and forfeited, and the home was represented by a cellar and an attic in a four-roomed house, the parlor and bedroom above it being let separately, while the whole catalogue of its contents might be given in half-a-dozen words — two or three damaged chairs, a bedstead and a mattress, a heap of rags, a cracked looking-glass, and a three-legged table, with a very scant allowance of pots and mugs.

Yet this home, such as it was, was much to Lil. Her mother was a loving-hearted woman. Happily, it has never yet been discovered that a woman's capacity for loving must be measured by the depth of her knowledge of domestic economy or by the height and strength of her temperance principles, else indeed this world would be a worse place by a good deal than it is now. Lil never knew how much her mother's love compassed her round, but she knew that every good thing she had came from her mother, and when at eleven years old she was fetched home from school to hear that her mother had fallen into the dock and was drowned, she was a heart-broken child for days and weeks together.

But she was a child both of strong im-

pulse and of considerable energy (the two do not always go together), and before her mother's funeral she had formed a plan of life for herself. She would live with her father and do everything for him herself, "so as he shouldn't miss mother." Mother had, she supposed, loved him; at least they never used to have words like most people's fathers and mothers, and she would love him and do for him, and make him comfortable all she could.

But the best will in the world and the most loving wishes cannot work miracles. Lil had not even the remotest conception of what comfort is, much less any idea how to produce it in a cellar kitchen. She knew nothing of cooking; though it was taught in the board school, she had passed the fifth standard and escaped from the meshes of the educational net too soon to reach the cookery class. She knew nothing of cleaning — how could she when she had never lived in a moderately clean room in her life, and had hardly ever seen a clean place except the school? She did know how to wash herself, for clean hands and face had been compulsory at school, but as for mending her own clothes or her father's, or making anything for herself, she had no notion whatever how to set about it. The high standard of execution demanded in all sewing at the school seemed to set it quite apart from anything in her life as a fine but useless art. It was impossible to imagine herself sitting down at home to set rows of almost invisible stitches in her father's ragged shirt or her own torn petticoat. In the eternal fitness of things cobble-stitch was more suitable, so cobble-stitch it was. As for making new things, Lil had never had a new frock in her life; everything she wore had been bought in a slop-shop or pawn-shop, the cast-off tawdry ragged finery of richer children.

She did her best; she tried to lay out the money as mother used to, she tried to cook the dinner, and now and then she gave the kitchen a clean-up, but things got worse and worse very fast. Her father spent more time and money at the public than ever, and Lil used to go and wait about for him and bring him home at nights because "mother used to," quite regardless of the fact that it only aggravated him to have a slip of a child like her waiting for him. She was very conscious of her devotion to him, and proud of it; proud too, in a childish way, of her position as keeping his house. Her love for him was very genuine and passionate, yet with an odd mixture of motherly protect-

ingness in it too; she would have done anything for him, no matter what. Her education fell from her as the brown enfolding sheaths fall from expanding leaf-buds; it had had its place to fill in her schooldays — it was needed no longer now the real claims of life came upon her, so it just shrivelled up and vanished. Six months after she left school she could hardly do the commonest sum, though she had satisfied the inspector only so recently that she was capable of doing "practice, bills of parcels, rule of three, and addition and subtraction of proper fractions."

A year later she could hardly write, and no wonder, for she had never had a pen in her hand since leaving school. She could read easily still, for she liked reading, but the literature within her reach was strictly limited to *Bow Bells* or the *London Journal*, borrowed from a neighbor, an evening paper when some exciting murder or divorce trial or great accident had induced her father to buy it, and now and again when she could "bone" a halfpenny out of the house money, a halfpenny novelette. One must not, however, be too hard on the halfpenny novelette. Its influence was not entirely bad, for while holding out ridiculously impossible and false views of life, it did tend somehow to impress upon Lil's mind that upon the whole villainy is villainous, and truth-speaking and courage are good.

In the daytime she roamed about as it seemed best to her when what she called her work was done. In the evening if her father was not in she roamed again, making plenty of acquaintances about the neighboring streets and courts, sometimes wandering on to some of the bigger, better-lighted streets to stare in at the shop windows; and once or twice, when her father was on a night shift and she was sure he would not be home, getting treated to a penny gaff or a music-hall. Lil was popular when she was not in a temper; she was good company, for she had a ready tongue, and she might have been treated much oftener, but, from some feeling incomprehensible to herself and quite indescribable, she never would let a "lad" treat her, and she never would go at all, there or anywhere else, if she had the slightest reason to think that her father might want her. Yet what did she not renounce in giving up that for him? How little we can realize it! Warmth and light, amusement and interest and splendor and glory, music and laughter — yes, and the pleasure of tears too; all she had ever known of the higher joys life has to

offer might be summed up in the words "penny gaff," and she had given this up not once or twice but many times for fear her father might want her. And now — now it was all ended! Lil's father had married again.

It had come upon her with an awful blow. An older girl might have anticipated it. Lil had never looked forward at all; she had thought she and her father would just go on as they were. Not even though she had noticed that her father had spent less at the public lately, and yet had been little at home; not even though she had seen that he had bought a new neckerchief and had laughed at him for blacking his boots, had the thought ever dawned on her that he might possibly be looking for another wife.

And then this morning — only this very morning — he had come in soon after ten o'clock, "before she was tidied up or anything," dressed in a better suit that she knew had been in pawn, looking somewhat uneasy, and bringing with him a tidy, comfortable-looking woman about his own age, with a bonny, curly-headed child of two in her arms.

"Why, father!" cried Lil amazed; but he stopped her, saying sheepishly with a jerk of the thumb over his shoulder at his companions, —

"'Tis a new mother for you, Lil, and a little brother too. I've married her; we've been to church to-day."

Lil felt as if the world was reeling. She stood still, clutching at the mantel-board. She could not speak for an instant. She scarcely heard as he added, "An' it's sorely some one as knows what's what is needed by the looks o' things here. It's a poor place, Maggie."

"Ay, it's poor enough, Jock Henderson," returned the woman in a round, pleasant voice; "but then it'll look a heap different time as my bits of things get in here. We'll have 'em straight by night. You'll help me, Lil, won't you? We'll soon be friends, eh?"

"Friends?" burst out Lil, her powers of speech returning in a flood. "Friends! You and me? Do you think as I'll stop here to have a stepmother over me? Not if I knows it! Father, it's shameful; you've served me shameful! Oh, I hate you — I do! I do!" And the poor passionate child flung herself out of the door, and fled into the streets.

She did not hear the pitiful "Eh, Jock, but ye should have told her, it's hard on her coming like this," that the kindly woman uttered; while her father rubbed

his head in embarrassment and distress as he answered, —

"I was a bit feared she'd take it hard, but I thought it 'ud be better when 'twas done an' couldn't be undone."

His wife shook her head, and sighed a little, but then she began to busy herself with her boy, releasing him from the shawl he had been wrapped in, and setting him on his feet on the floor (not without an inward shudder at the state of it), while her husband looked on with pleasure, and then began to coax the sturdy little lad, till, for a while, the newly married pair forgot Lil.

She was tearing through the streets, up and down, back and forwards, round again through court and alley, in aimless, impotent yet furious misery. She could not speak to any one yet. "Oh, it's cruel, it's cruel!" she cried to herself. It was not only that her father had married again, had loved some one better than her, had brought home a stepmother, had slighted all she could do and had done for him, but it was the way he had done it. She had thought she was everything to him, and he had not thought it worth while even to tell her what he was intending to do. Her love, her pride, her vanity, her self-importance, were all wounded well-nigh to death, and her heart was torn with jealousy besides. She was like a mad thing, yet she could not take herself very far away from the home that only that very morning she had thought all her own. She kept coming back, as a bird comes back to its rifled nest, watching every movement and any comings or goings, yet flying out of sight in an instant if any one looked her way.

Once she saw a cart come to the door with a few nice bits of furniture, better far than any she had ever known. She saw her father come out, and the man who had brought them help him to carry them in; then from her hiding-place she saw the man and her father shaking hands, and her father smiling and looking proud and pleased at something the man had said. He had not looked so for long enough. It made her feel sick with anger and she fled again. Once more she had ventured so near that she could see in to the fireside, where a fire was blazing such as she would never have made. "Wasting good coals like that!" she said to herself. "She'll soon come to the end of the money!" But the door opened just as she was peering in to see who was there, and she had only time to dart back and hide herself at the corner of the entry before her step-

mother came out and looked anxiously up and down a minute.

"I see nothing of her," Lil could hear her say. "I do wonder where the child has got to;" and she almost laughed to herself in spite of her anger.

She told no one her trouble all day, not even Mrs. Evans, the knocker-up, who lodged next door but two. She felt a sort of shame, a sense of slight put upon herself; her pride was so hurt that she could not speak of it. Mrs. Evans earned a scanty and unpleasant livelihood by walking round the neighborhood between the hours of four and seven A.M., and sometimes earlier, to rouse up different work-people in time for their work, earning about a penny a day and generally a good many curses, levelled at herself as the nearest representative of things in general, from those whom she thus served. From the nature of her pursuit she was at home all day, and having leisure for much conversation and no family of her own she had taken rather a fancy to Lil. But to-day Lil never went near her; she could not bear her questions.

But after dusk, when the girls of the neighborhood gathered together at their accustomed corner, some on their way back from work, others just running out on any excuse from their homes, a longing to tell some one, to impart something of her passion, to feel her anger justified in the eyes of others, overcame her; she burst out, as we have seen, to the whole group at once with her story, was listened to for a few minutes, sympathized with a little, and laughed at just as much, and then left all alone in her pain and anger and misery, till now, thrown back upon herself, in bitterness and in despair she was turning her steps homewards, not knowing where else to go, driven unknown to herself by the instincts of hunger, yet hating herself for yielding.

Once she had reached the door of her home she did not hesitate, but flung it open and marched in, her head held very high. But what a changed place it was! In spite of herself she almost started back. In place of the cracked fourpenny lamp, that had served them so long and that smelt so bad, a neat white lamp shed a bright light all through the room and shone on sundry pieces of polished furniture, a new hearth-rug, a clock on the mantel-shelf, and, most wonderful of all, a clean, well-whitened stone floor. Even on her wedding-day the new Mrs. Henderson had not been able to put up with the state of things she found. She had made

an errand to take her husband out for a couple of hours, and then with the help of a friend had turned to and given the place a good clean.

But she was one of those women, rare in her class, who can be clean without worshipping cleanliness, and who understand that the means of producing cleanliness do not produce comfort. All signs of her work had been cleared off before her husband came in, and now she sat by the fire, sewing in hand, like any "fine madam," in poor Lil's phrase, while Jock sat opposite her, pipe in mouth and newspaper on his knee, but not reading, because occupied in watching little Tim as he scrambled about on the rug. It was a pretty picture of family life, but Lil felt there was no place in it for her. She stood still in the midst of the room.

"Come in to the fire and warm yourself, lassie," said Mrs. Henderson kindly, making way for her; "you look fair perished."

Lil made no answer. The warmth and light were taking such effect upon her that she was afraid of bursting into tears again. If her father had spoken it might have been different, but he did but scratch his head, and turn upon her a very perplexed gaze. She snatched a crust of bread from the table, and hurried up the dark stairs to the attic. The only light in the room, by which she had been accustomed to go to bed, came from a lamp-post distant some twenty yards, but faint though it was it was sufficient to show her that even here were more of the hated changes. Since her mother's death she had slept beside her father; now the old bedstead, that she never remembered with anything on it but a straw mattress and a heap of mixed rags, was covered with proper bedding, blankets, and a counterpane that showed white in the faint light. In the far corner stood a small bed, that had once been hers but that she had outgrown, and which had only never been pawned because it was so rickety as to be worthless, and it too had fresh bedding.

"They mean to turn me out. There ain't no place for me!" she cried, as the full significance of these arrangements burst upon her. "That's for the little 'un!"

Hastily she began to devour her crust. "If that's what they mean I won't go; I'll just stop to spite 'em," she was thinking to herself, when she heard steps on the stair.

"Lil, my dear," said a voice from the darkness that she quickly recognized as

her stepmother's, "you'll be wondering where you are to sleep. The parlor folk is moving out, and we's to have the whole place to-morrow, an' then we'll be more comf'ble, but for to-night they let you have a bed in their empty room."

Surprise changed Lil's first speech very much indeed from anything that she had intended or expected it to be.

"How's father going to pay for a whole house likes o' this?" she asked. "It's little enough money he gets to pay for what we 'ave. You talk like a fool."

"Nay, my dear," answered the cheery voice, "I've a trade of my own. I've a knitting-machine, and I make good money too. I hope you an' him 'll be better off nor you have been."

But this was a fresh offence to the poor child. "Better off than when mother was 'ere, she means," was the stinging thought as she retorted, "Don't you be a-dearing me like that; it makes me sick, it does. I ain't your dear—no, nor never will be, but I'll make it a dear day for you as you ever 'com'd 'ere—ay, I will. Coming sneaking 'ere, where father and I was 'appy together. Oh, I'll serve you out, I will! I'll be even with you! I'll let you see!" And so the frenzied child raved on, till suddenly a sort of blank sensation made her aware that she was speaking to empty space. Mrs. Henderson had wisely left her alone, and she sighed as she went down the stairs, but smiled as she opened the kitchen door, and said, "She'll come round after a bit, I hope."

The day that he had persuaded Maggie to marry him had been a better day for Jock Henderson than he was at all aware of yet; and she must have seen something worth caring for in him. Already since he had known her he had given up drinking at the gin-palaces, and she had gone far to make a different man of him; but the mistake of keeping his intended marriage a secret from Lil seemed likely to trouble their new lives a good deal. Maggie had several times asked to see Lil before the marriage, but Jock had always put it off on some excuse or other; but indeed he hardly knew why he had been so loath to tell the child his plans. Anyhow, he had managed to take the worst possible way with her.

Left alone, Lil, worn out with passion, hunger, and fatigue, hurried down to the empty room below, flung herself just as she was on the bed prepared for her, and, with her heart full of plans of vengeance, fell asleep.

And the morning found her mood un-

changed. Sullenly she came down and took no notice of her stepmother's greeting and kind friendly words. Her father had gone to work hours ago. The room was tidy and the teapot was by the fire for her; she took it up without a word, and began to eat and drink in silence.

Little Tim came with baby-trotting steps across the floor, and looking up in her face with wondering eyes put his little hands upon her knees. She drew back so hastily as almost to throw the child down, and—cursed him for "a hateful brat." (Lil's only continuation school, you see, had been the street, and the education got there was not likely to be lost as the earlier education had been.)

Mrs. Henderson was a good woman, but not a perfect one, nor a very patient one. The little Tim, bewildered and frightened at the angry look and words, stared at Lil amazed for a minute, then burst into a loud roar. His mother caught him up, crying hotly,—

"For shame of yourself, Lil! For shame! I wonder you weren't afraid to curse an innocent little child like that. I'll tell your father what ways you have learnt. Why, little Tim never heard such words in his life before, and to think he should hear them from you as ought to be his sister! There, there, laddie, don't cry! None shall hurt ye! Mother's own lad! Mother's precious laddie!"

Lil had turned very white. Her own passion had frightened her. Her own heart was echoing her stepmother's reproach.

"I never cursed any one before, whatever they did to me—never," she thought, in a kind of wild, unspeakable terror. "Oh, what is coming to me? I was never real bad before!" She sat very still a minute or two, but her heart was beating furiously, so that it took away her breath, and she could not speak. Her stepmother did not look at her; she laid down the bread she was eating—it would have choked her—and then without a word she got up, deliberately put her chair back against the wall, opened the door, and walked up the cellar steps into the court and on into the street. Her stepmother's attention was attracted by the noise of the door. Her short-lived anger had died out; she called to her kindly, "Come back, child—you didn't mean it;" but Lil would not hear and went on.

And now she was all alone in the streets just as yesterday. Yes, but to-day was worse than yesterday. Yesterday she had been angry—mad, as she would have

said — with her father; she was wronged, and felt herself completely justified in being angry. But to-day — what had she done? — what made her feel so badly, so different? More angry even than before with her father, she could not any more find a sort of bitter pleasure in thinking of her wrongs, because — because — what had she done? Oh, she would not think of it! And yet all the while her own words were echoing in her ears — her words when she cursed the little child as it came to her so confiding, so friendly like. And she had done it wilfully too. She had felt drawn to the little thing; she knew she could have loved it, and yet just out of spite at its mother and her father, she had done a thing such as she had never done before — a thing that she felt to be utterly hateful and horrible in herself — a thing that she had always thought real bad in any one else to do to a “little ‘un,” though as for swearing at folks as provoked you, that was a different matter and of very small consequence.

She was very miserable.

As she wandered along the narrow street with uncertain, loitering steps, her friend Mrs. Evans came suddenly round the corner. “Mrs. Evins,” as the neighborhood called her, had been refreshing after her morning’s labors — “Just a drop to warm me; I needs it most mornings, I can tell ye, an’ so would you, tramp, trampin’ the streets hours together for a penny ‘ere an’ a penny there,” she frequently observed; and now a faint odor of gin hung about her person, and her countenance beamed with the optimism that is born of two “goes” one after another, and which sees no evil anywhere while it has the power of purchasing a third.

“Why, Lil, wot ever’s up?” she exclaimed as she stopped in front of Lil, setting her hands on her hips under her frowzy shawl, so as to show the rolling stoutness of her figure, while her bonnet with dirty yellow ribbons slightly marred the dignity of her attitude by slipping down on one side. “You don’t never mean to say you’re a-taking on like this cos your father’s gone an’ married again? Lor, child, whativver did you expect, eh? Answer me that, eh? An’ him a likely figure of a man as any woman might ha’ taken up with an’ not been ashamed o’ herself. Why, I’d not say as I’d ‘ave said nay to ‘im myself if he’d arst me — not as he ever looked my way either,” she added with a coarse laugh.

Lil did not laugh nor answer, yet neither did she move away. She had found no

real sympathy yesterday among “the gells,” and though yesterday Mrs. Evans’s words would have added fuel to the flame of her wrath, to-day the dull pain in her breast was so bad that she felt she must speak to somebody.

“Was you greatly took aback, Lil — was that it?” and as the girl nodded a mute assent she added, “Come ‘ome with me, Lil, an’ tell us all about it, an’ we’ll get our breakfasts together. I’ve a bloater ‘ere as it ‘ud do yer heart good to smell, an’ we’ll go ‘alves. Yer look as if yer ‘adn’t tasted this week.”

Perhaps the kindness of this offer was not quite disinterested, for Jock Henderson’s marriage had excited to wildness the curiosity and gossip of the court, and it would be, if not money in Mrs. Evans’s pocket, yet certainly worth one or two cups of tea or even a go or two of gin to her if she was able to tell the whole story on good authority.

But the kindness, such as it was, was welcome to Lil. The two went back together. Lil cast an apprehensive glance homewards, but no one looked out, and unseen she slipped into Mrs. Evans’s lodgings.

Mrs. Evans of course occupied but one room, and that one was neither neat nor sweet, having never known an open window within the memory of man. “Let me be warm,” she used to say. “I hates your draughtses. Gammon all that the tracking woman says about fresh air. It makes yer ‘ungry, an’ it makes yer cold, an’ wot’s the good when yer’ve got little enough to fill yer belly any time? I’d rather die warm nor live cold.”

Bustling about, she soon got the fire up, and over the cup of hot tea that was so welcome to her chilled frame Lil told the story of her wrongs.

Mrs. Evans was, to tell the truth, rather disappointed to find Lil knew so little, and had nothing to say about the courtship and first acquaintance. However, she sympathized fully with Lil as to the way “she had been served,” and when the story was done she meditated a minute or two in silence. “Lil’s a likely girl and stirring,” she thought. “I could get a ‘eap more work now Potter’s and Burton’s yards is starting again, an’ if I don’t get it some ‘un else will. It ‘ud be a chance for me — I will;” and then and there she spake with her lips.

“Look ‘ere, Lil,” she said, “if they ain’t good to yer, yer come an’ live with me. I allus ‘ad a liking for yer, Lil, yer knows, cos yer’re like my girl wot died — and

here she showed a disposition to weep — “an’ there’s a ‘ome an’ a welcome ‘ere ready for yer if ye like to come. Wot d’ye say?”

Lil hesitated. It was a refuge for her pride; that of itself was a strong temptation. She should be in a way independent like the other girls, for of course she should work; she never imagined for an instant that Mrs. Evans would keep her for nothing; she knew too much of the world for that. But then there was her father. True, he had “treated her bad, shameful,” and she did want to be revenged on him, but still it seemed to hurt her hard to think of leaving him altogether. She would have liked to have been revenged some other way. And somehow, too, the thought of little Tim seemed to draw her home; it was queer, but she wanted to see the little thing again. She drew a long breath; these perplexities of feeling worried her.

“I don’t know what father ‘ud say,” she answered doubtfully.

“E ‘aven’t treated you that well that yer need fret about that,” observed Mrs. Evans, watching her closely. “If yer ‘ad been a brat o’ six he couldn’t ha’ made less on yer.”

“I could get a heap of work out of her,” she was thinking the while, “and once she came to me I’d be safe enough; she’d be too proud to give in and go back; there’s a heap o’ grit in Lil.”

“I don’t know,” repeated Lil again. Then she added after a minute with some spirit, “I’ll go back now, and if he treats me right I’ll stop, an’ if not I’ll come straight away to you, an’ thank you kindly. There ain’t many as wants me — specially not my own,” she added bitterly.

With that decision Mrs. Evans was forced to be content. “Well, well, I ‘opes ‘e’ll do right by yer now, though ‘e ain’t done it before,” she observed somewhat hypocritically, for she was getting more and more set on having Lil with her — “an’ if not yer knows where to come to, an’ where there’ll never be a welcome” — and here that disposition to weep returned again, and she rocked herself back and forwards in her chair, repeating sleepily, “Hever an’ hever. Amen.” The gin, coupled with her early rising, was having its effect, and even before Lil left her she was drowsing in her chair.

CHAPTER II.

LIL stayed out all day again, and went home at night in great uncertainty as to what she should do. Somewhere or other

— perhaps at the board school — a vague idea of duty had managed to enter her soul, though it was greatly confused in her mind by a connection with funerals that she could not reason out. “Doing no more nor your duty” by a relation was a phrase constantly used in her hearing as a euphemistic expression for seeing that they had a decent funeral with all the outlay that could be afforded (and often much more) on mourning, hearse, mourning-coach, and other trappings of woe. Yet in spite of this she had a sort of notion that duty referred to other things too, and that it was her duty to stop with her father, unless he turned her out. Maybe she had learned it at the penny gaff, or from one of her novelettes, but there it was, and it was of sufficient power to conquer in a sharp struggle with her pride, and to take her home, though not strong enough very much to affect her conduct when she got there. At any rate, she was not going to Mrs. Evans if they treated her proper like; that was all that her mind was made up to at present.

Mrs. Henderson was at her knitting-machine as Lil somewhat shyly came down the cellar steps and into the kitchen. It clicked and worked so rapidly that her curiosity was excited.

“Come in, Lil,” said Mrs. Henderson, glancing up at her kindly without checking her work. “Little Tim’s asleep on the rug, and I thought it ‘ud be a good chance to get on with this order I’ve got. He does pull at me so, I’ve no time for nothing.”

Lil did not answer, but she came a step nearer.

“It’s a queer-looking thing, isn’t it, till ye know the go of it, but it’s been a good friend to me,” continued Mrs. Henderson; and for a bit she talked on without waiting for any answer, and Lil sat down and looked round the old home, so changed that but for the dirty wall-paper she would not have known it for the same place, and even that Mrs. Henderson had pasted up where it used to hang torn and ragged.

It was nicer and “comfortabler,” as she would have said, and she was almost inclined to yield to the good influence, and indeed had made one or two remarks about the machine, when the door opened, and her father came in.

“Ere’s something like a ‘ome,” he observed approvingly, as he came into the warmth and light. “Outside it’s enough to cut you in two.”

Mrs. Henderson looked up with a smile, but Lil frowned as she caught the words,

and relapsed into sullenness. The old wild loyalty to her dead mother awoke in her heart. He had forgotten mother, but she was not going to forget her — no, nor to think any stranger better than her. The very fact that she had been herself almost betrayed into approving the new state of things made her more angry both with him and with herself. She set her lips; her face took on a hard, bitter look, strange in one so young.

But her father hardly noticed her. Seeing her there he supposed all was right again between her and her stepmother; he had expected her to "take on a bit" at first, but to get over it soon, and at all times he was a very inarticulate being where anything of feeling was concerned.

The noise of his coming in awoke little Tim. He did not stir, but looked up and smiled as his new "da" stepped up to the rug. He was one of those sweet, engaging children that are to be found, thank Heaven, in every class of life, whose looks captivate the beholder at once, and whose smiles are competed for alike by older children and by grown-up people. He was like a little king as he lay there on the rug, his curls all tossed and tumbled, his blue eyes shining in the firelight, his round, plump legs bare, having kicked off the restraining shawl that his mother had put over him, and his hands clutching a penny wooden horse that "da" had bought for him yesterday, while he smiled regally upon them all.

"Yer little beggar," observed Mr. Henderson briefly, as he looked down upon him, and Mrs. Henderson left her machine and stood beside her husband to look at her treasure.

"Bless him!" she said. "He's a bonny lad, isn't he, Jock? Ye lazy lad, get up and come to mother."

But behold, Tim, with true regal caprice, in the plenitude of his power, preferred to stretch out his little hands to "da," smiling the while as one who confers a great favor. Jock caught him up, laughing at his wife, and began tossing him, playing with him, making him shriek with joyous laughter, while Mrs. Henderson looked on in dear delight, pretending to scold them both for making such a noise, but hardly able to conceal her rapture.

In a minute or two, however, she turned round, saying, "Just look at 'em, Lil. Did you ever see the like? How Tim takes to your father!"

But the room was empty. Lil had silently fled and was up in the old attic,

which was all her own now, wringing her hands, tearing about the narrow space in a paroxysm of jealous misery.

Oh! how she hated — hated them both — the woman and the child who had stolen into her life and her home and spoilt it all!

And yet the very pain that seemed to madden her had its root in the knowledge deep down in her heart that she might hate them, but that they were not hateful — nay, but much better than herself, and that, indeed, she could have loved them both, especially little Tim, only she would not.

Three or four days later, and one evening Lil burst into Mrs. Evans's little room as if pursued by some wild creature.

"I've come to you," she said. "I can't stand it no longer, and I won't!"

"An' it's welcome ye are, my gal," observed Mrs. Evans effusively. "I thought it 'ud come to this soon, an' it's glad I am to 'ave a 'ome an' a shelter to hoffer the orphyn — or, at least, one as is as good."

"They put upon me worse nor ever; father thinks nothing o' me now — ony o' that brat!"

"Ay, ay! Sit ye down, child. I've bin a-watching her ways about the court, and I says to myself, says I, 'It'll not be long as Lil 'ull stand that. No gell with a bit o' sperrit o' her own would.'"

"No, they wouldn't, would they?"

"She's a mean-spirited tyke if ever there was one, an' that's my opinion; an' if it's any good to yer, ye're welcome to it. Never a word to a neighbor at the pump, not so much as 'Won't yer look in,' or 'Would yer be so kind, mum, as to tell me the best chandler's 'ereabout,' being as she is a stranger; but even if folks de-means theirselves to speak to her, she ain't got a civil word to give 'em back," continued Mrs. Evans, who, it is true, had been distinctly and firmly repulsed by the new-comer. "No, Lil, there's them as forsakes their own, an' there's them as takes them up, an' yer'll never find *me* a-forsaking on ye."

"Ye're real good to me," murmured Lil. Yet even while she spoke her heart was sinking a little. Mrs. Evans's room had never looked quite so squalid and untidy in her eyes before; never had the mixed odors, the remains of many meals, the filthy floor, the dirty clothing tossed here and there, attracted her attention before. Even the few days of better things at home had had their effect; she had learnt to know there was something better. But

she set her lips, and her heart grew hard again as she remembered other things.

"I'll stop with yer an' work for yer 's long 's yer'll 'ave me, Mrs. Evins," she said, and Mrs. Evans was filled with joy, foreseeing much work for Lil and less for herself, bad mornings when she could stop in bed and send Lil the rounds instead, besides a considerable extension of these rounds, on the strength of Lil's legs being still young.

That night, as Mrs. Evans was just sinking placidly into her first early sleep, soothed with a go of gin and this comfortable prospect, a queer, half-choked noise like a sob from Lil broke the thread of her dreaming.

"What's up, child?" she asked sleepily. "You ain't never a-crying, surely?"

"Crying? Not me!" said Lil indignantly. "It was — it was only just something as choked me — hiccups I b'lieve."

"Take — drop — gin!" murmured Mrs. Evans, drowsing off again; and Lil, slipping from her side, sought softly in the confusion of cups and plates for a jug with a drop of water, to check, if possible, the sob that was shaking her from head to foot.

It was the thought of little Tim — not her father, not the home, not the new comforts, but little Tim. For only the day before she had quarrelled fiercely with her stepmother; for the first time she had goaded her with words and taunts until the patient woman had turned upon her; and Lil had gloried in her success in exasperating her. Mrs. Henderson had threatened to tell her husband, and he had walked in in the midst of her quarrel, and had sided altogether with his wife. Lil had vowed she'd be beholden to them no more; she'd be off next day, that she would. And then before nightfall Mrs. Henderson had come to her and said, —

"Let bygones be bygones, Lil. I ought to a' had more patience." And in spite of Lil's dignified silence, she had gone on to say: "I wants to know if you'll do sommat for me, Lil. I wants to know if you'll take little Tim to sleep wi' you. He's getting big an' he's a bit of a bother to me, an' if you'd take him, Lil — if you'd take him in your room," she went on, pleading against herself and the girl's sullen looks, "it 'ud be a real comfort to me."

"Surely once she took to him, it 'ud turn her heart a bit to me," the mother thought in her loving cunning, "an' she couldn't but take to him, once she had him

to sleep with her, bless him — though I should miss him, I should."

Alas! Lil's only answer then was a fierce "No! I'll not!" and she had forthwith rushed out.

But now — now, how different she felt! She seemed to ache for the touch of those little dimpled hands and feet. She might have had that little curly head lying beside her own on the pillow instead of Mrs. Evans's frowzy, grizzled locks; she might have watched the blue eyes opening to laugh at her, and the arms stretched out to her; for, in spite of all her jealousy, she had petted the little fellow when she thought no one saw, and he had taken to her greatly. She might have had him all to herself for hours and hours, and the pain at her heart seemed to gather and gather till she could hardly bear it.

But there was grit in Lil, as Mrs. Evans had said, and that strength of will which is such a force either for good or evil. She did not swerve from her purpose, even when next day, which was Sunday, she saw her father riding little Tim on his shoulder about the court, and the child caught sight of her and called to her. No, she would not hear or even look at them, but marched out of the court with her head held high, while her father set down little Tim, and scratched his head with a look of grieved perplexity.

Mrs. Evans spent that Sunday in calling on her patrons and hunting up new ones, and so successful was she that there was a long fresh round, worth at least two-and-sixpence a day, ready for Monday morning.

And so Lil's new life began, close beside her old one, and yet so strangely changed. Her first morning was fine fortunately, but cold — cold as death itself. It was different from any cold she had ever felt before; it seemed to get a hold upon one, that cold at four in the morning, as no daylight cold ever did.

"It grips your inside and fair wrings it," Mrs. Evans once observed when she wished to describe the sensation.

It was cold to Lil in her scanty clothing as she hurried along, but far, far colder as at some wind-swept street corner she stood beating on the door with a heavy stick, till at last a growl from within told that her work was done, and the sleeper was waked. Then on again, through streets all deadly still, not a sound but her own footsteps breaking the silence as she passed swiftly on through the familiar ways, all unfamiliar in the loneliness and

darkness. It was a relief when the first clang of hammers began to ring in the yards, and very glad was she when at half past six her task was finished, and she could creep back to the empty room and lie down on the bed alone to rest and get the chill out of her bones, while Mrs. Evans, as usual, stayed out to refresh and warm at her favorite early public.

She dropped asleep after a while, and was roused by Mrs. Evans bustling in.

"Come, child," she cried, "why, fire's not lit yet! Come, come, be stirring. I'm fair worn out; yer must light the fire every morning, an' get breakfast for me too, afore ye think o' sleeping."

After that breakfast, Mrs. Evans dozed off as usual in her chair, after bidding Lil tidy up the place. And Lil did a little fitful and superficial cleaning and tidying—very poor work it would have seemed to Mrs. Henderson—resting between whiles, for her limbs ached with her unwonted early rising and wandering in the cold.

Towards afternoon Mrs. Evans roused up and informed Lil that Mrs. Skinner, the midwife, had promised to drop in to tea if she had not a case on, and Mrs. Murphy, from round the corner, too.

"They are that took up with yer luck, Lil, comin' to live along wi' me—drop-pin' on yer feet like—they said as they must look in just to wish yer joy."

So Lil went forth again on sundry errands in preparation for the festivity, the last being with the beer-jug and the gin-bottle.

"An' go to one o' Walkerses publics—they with the glass barrel, yer knows," observed Mrs. Evans, as she handed them to her. "It's a step further, but they gives yer the long pull there, an' their gin's tip-top."

Mrs. Skinner, a burly woman, with a large, pale, flabby countenance, was not a tea-drinker. "I get's too much tea o' nights, an' when I'm at my cases," she observed, "I daren't take a drop o' beer, then, so I relishes it now;" and, in accordance with her guest's well-known tastes, Mrs. Evans had filled her jug. Mrs. Murphy and herself preferred tea with a drop. This was a great occasion, for Mrs. Evans thought she saw before her a not distant prospect of doubling her income, and Lil's "bite and bits of things" would not amount to much. Therefore the savory sausage smoked in a blackened frying-pan, which had to be held carefully tilted on one side, because there was a hole in it, and before the fire was a pile

of dripping toast. The fire was piled high, and the heat in the little room was stifling, even before the tea was poured out.

Mrs. Murphy was the first to arrive, a little, dark-haired woman, with an aggrieved manner. She had been married twice, but, as she herself frequently observed, "the suckumstances was peccoliar,"—both her husbands being still alive. Married early to a sailor, he had left her, as she had often said, "with a boy and a babe," and sailing into the vast afar—Australia it was commonly believed—had returned no more. With considerable energy and exasperation she had managed to maintain herself a few years, but whether or not it was for the traditional seven years so firmly believed in by the British public as setting a wife free from a vanished husband, it is impossible to say; it was a delicate subject, and no one liked to ask outright. At any rate she espoused Mr. Murphy, another sailor, and—just like the aggravatiousness of things—in less than a year afterwards "the former thing," as Bianca says of her deserted husband, reappeared with a long story and a well-filled purse.

"They give me my choice *honorable*," Mrs. Murphy said afterwards. "They said as I could stick to which I liked best; but I said 'No, Joe Lingen'—that was my first—'I'll not say what I'd have liked—bygones *is* bygones—but I'll stick to him as I rightly belongs to, an' that's Mike Murphy.'"

The sense of personal martyrdom so evident in Mrs. Murphy's manner, was supposed to date from this remarkable triumph of virtue. Perhaps it was more remarkable still, that Joe and Mike had been mates ever since, and the best of friends.

Mrs. Skinner was late. "A case," she said in an explanatory whisper as at length she seated herself beside Mrs. Murphy. "Oh, them babies! If ever there is an ill-convenient time for me, that is the time they manages to come at. I'm fair done out."

"Take a drop o' beer, dear; it'll bring you round," said Mrs. Evans soothingly; while Mrs. Murphy ejaculated,—

"Dear, dear, you do look bad, for sure."

"My looks *an'* my feelings is alike then," replied Mrs. Skinner, with a slight tendency to snappiness. But she was prevailed on soon to "pick a bit," and beginning to revive after a little desultory conversation about her most recent experiences, turned her attention to Lil.

"Well, Lil," she began in a slightly hortatory tone, "so you're the gell as Mrs. Evins 'as took such a fancy to, an' 'as, so to say, 'dopted. Well, you *are* in luck's way."

Lil did not answer; she only shrugged her shoulders slightly and continued chopping her sausage into bits convenient to be placed on her bread and so eaten. (Mrs. Evans's one fork was placed at Mrs. Skinner's service, as the great lady of the party.) That day's experience had told her, if she had not known it before, that she would well earn all she got from Mrs. Evans.

That lady was looking slightly uneasy. Mrs. Skinner was a person of wealth, position, and influence—the "dear duchess" of those courts and alleys. She condescended greatly in coming to Mrs. Evans. It would be disastrous to offend her, but still Mrs. Evans did not feel quite sure enough of Lil to wish the whole flow of Mrs. Skinner's powers of exhortation turned upon her.

"Ain't ye thankful, hay? Yer ought to be," continued Mrs. Skinner more sternly, as she received no answer. "Mrs. Evins, as everybody knows, 'as seen better days—to take up wi' a gell like you!"

"Ah! but Mrs. Skinner dear," interposed Mrs. Evans, with an apologetic smile intended to be very sweet, "ye see I loves Lil, she's that like my own poor gell that was took, and Lil loves me, don't yer, Lil? An' she's been that bad used and scorned by them as should 'a done better by her, that she's real glad to come to me. Arn't yer, Lil?"

"Yes, I am," said Lil briefly.

The reference to her wrongs had been very judiciously introduced to touch her pride.

"That's well," continued Mrs. Skinner, in a mollified tone; and Mrs. Murphy struck in,—

"If only folks 'ud do their dooty. That's what I allus says, an' what I've acted up to, whether it was to my own good or not."

"Yer 'ave indeed, Mrs. Murphy dear, yer 'ave indeed; no one more so," cried Mrs. Evans, understanding the reference to that triumph of virtue already spoken of. "If there was more like yer and Mrs. Skinner now!"

"Yer may say that indeed, Mrs. Evins," said Mrs. Skinner with much dignity. "I'm sure my duty, what it costes me there's only One as knows. What with the nights and the up and downness, and the knock-knocking at the door, till

one 'ud think they'd beat it in, an' the running 'ere an' running there, an' everyone thinking they're the fust consequence, it's awful worriting, it is," and she sighed deeply. "I know I ain't long for this world with it all." And as Mrs. Evans and Mrs. Murphy began to condole with and comfort their afflicted friend by assuring her how ill she looked, and how short her life was likely to be, Lil seized her opportunity to slip away and wander alone through the streets in the darkness till the visitors had gone home, when she and Mrs. Evans promptly retired to bed, to rise again soon after three and find it raining hard, with an east wind blowing.

And thus the days went by. It was winter; the fine mornings were few indeed. Three or four times a week Lil crept home drenched to the very skin. It was curious, too, that her round grew longer and longer, while Mrs. Evans's grew shorter, and on some of the worst days Mrs. Evans's head was so bad she could not lift it from the pillow, and Lil had to take her list as well as her own. And these days began to come oftener and oftener as the cold strengthened with the lengthening January days. Mrs. Evans fed her well enough as far as quantity went, but for all that she was getting very thin, and her clothes were almost worn to pieces.

Lil was always very tired in the afternoon; a sort of weary feeling crept over her, she could hardly drag her limbs along. She used always to go out if it was not wet, and watch for a chance of seeing what Mrs. Henderson and little Tim were doing. She never would let her stepmother speak to her, however. Many a time she had run into Mrs. Evans's and banged the door if she thought Mrs. Henderson looked at her as though she were going to speak, and Mrs. Evans always loudly applauded her spirit on these occasions; but many a time, too, did she follow them unseen along the streets, when Mrs. Henderson was taking her work home, or was out giving little Tim the daily airing that she thought so necessary, and her neighbors so ridiculous. Once or twice Lil had fallen in with her father, who was in good work just now, and he had tried to stop her; but she had turned from him. Once he had even caught her hand, but she had wrenched it away and fled. Often on Saturdays and Sundays Lil had seen him with Tim and his wife; she knew he loved Tim—no one could help it. She thought he was perfectly happy and satisfied, and had forgotten her and ceased to care for her.

"He's got her and Tim," she said to herself. "He don't want me."

She little guessed how the dumb, inarticulate spirit, incapable of finding expression, yet yearned for her, and how her father spent hours of wondering how he could bring her back. If he had applied to the law, no doubt he could have made her return, but what did he know of the law? To the poor man in his ignorance the law is generally but a powerful engine, blind in its operation, too often threatening utter destruction, and he would indeed be rash who should himself set it in motion.

Yet Lil loved him still in her secret heart, and jealousy — the fruit of that love — was as strong a motive to keep her away even as pride.

In the course of her early morning walks she had gone further through the town now than ever before; she had found a short way down to one group of houses where two clients lived, and following on, came past the yards with their deafening clamor, between two great gravings-docks, where men crept like pigmies, dwarfed by their own achievements, about the hulls of huge ships, and so on to the tide-washed dock wall, where under the lee of a shed she found a little shelter from the keen wind. Here she would loiter sometimes for long hours together, watching the tossing grey-brown waves under the wintry sky, the gulls that wheeled and called and fluttered, the passing vessels — tugs towing long lines of flats or lofty ships, red-sailed flats bound for Runcorn and the salt-mines, heavy mud flats, coasting steamers, sailing vessels; while across the river, in the Sloyne, lay the big training-ship and countless smaller ships at anchor. The stream was not quite at its narrowest here; above, on her left hand, it widened till it lay like a great lake between the low shores, and below, narrowing to where the throng of vessels was thickest, it widened again towards the mouth. Lil did not know why she liked it, the sea wind often made her shiver after the close hot air of Mrs. Evans's room, but there was some sense of freedom there that attracted her. Since her humiliation she had never cared to join the other girls; alone there she forgot herself a little, and the passions that fretted her young life away were lulled.

So often did she come that those who worked about there got to look for her. She had noticed a woman who came down every day for perhaps a week together — an elderly woman, neatly dressed all in

black, with a queer, old-fashioned black bonnet, and bent shoulders. Lil knew who she was; the Bible-woman they called her. Once, in her mother's lifetime, she had called at their door, but her father had said he wanted none such cattle about his house, and ever after the door had been shut against her.

One day as Lil sat cowering under the shed wall, staring dully out over the water, this person stopped. "Are ye no cold, lassie?" she said. "I see ye here every day."

Lil looked up at the kindly shrewd Scotch face.

"Yes, I'm cold enough, but I likes it too," she said, drawn in spite of herself into a confidence.

"Ay? The caller feeling minds me o' the hill air in my ain Scotland, but there's few here as likes it. I've been ilka day lately to bring John Hutchison yonder news o' his wife; she's i' hospital and been sair ill, an' I'm seeing her ilka day. Have ye none belonging ye, lassie, that ye are aye alone?"

"No!" said Lil fiercely, "I've none." And then more gently, but still with bitterness, "At least I have a father, but he don't want me."

"Has he turned you out?" said the woman, well accustomed to such occurrences in the seething life around her.

"No, I turned myself out. Mother's dead, and he took an' married again. It was a shame, it was!"

"A bad woman, perhaps? Was she bad to ye?"

No answer for a while, and the woman watched in silence the working of the girl's face. The answer came at length however, as if wrung from her, reluctant, but true.

"No — no, not bad."

Another pause. "My lassie," said the woman, very slowly, "did ye no love yer father?"

"I did — I did!" cried poor Lil. "Everybody knows I did!"

"An' did ye no want him to be happy?"

Again no answer, and she added: "I'll be here to-morrow, lassie. Maybe we can have a bit talk, I must be going now." And she went without another word.

But that to-morrow never came.

Lil did not lift her head or look after the woman; she sat still, staring over the waves. Not want him to be happy? Why, that was just what she had wanted — the only thing she had cared about. She had tried all she could ever since mother had died — tried her hardest, and it had

all been no good; it had come to nothing; and he had treated her — ah! it was hateful of him! And all the old bitter feelings surged up again in her heart. But somehow the words "Did ye no want him to be happy?" came echoing back in her mind in spite of herself. She knew — yes, she could not deny it, even to herself — he looked happier, better cared-for now, than he had done for long enough. When she thought of him with his new wife at his side and little Tim on his shoulder as they went out of the court last Sunday, she knew he had been happy then. Did she grudge it to him?

For long hours the girl, so unused to quiet thought, sat there pondering, thinking, seemingly gazing out at sea and sky, noticing nothing. Yet who can say when, or where, or whence is born that first faint stirring of the spirit, which may come to mean, in all its widest senses, a new life?

It was the end of February. Black east wind had prevailed for weeks, keeping sailing vessels out of the river, and hanging a pall alike over sea and sky; but to-day there was a change coming. The wind had dropped altogether since noon; the sky was grey still, but had a softened look, the greyness was no longer the blank, unbroken greyness of despair, but here and there it was varied into infinite shades, softened by tender, gleaming touches, where like a dawning hope light was almost, yet not quite, breaking through. Low down towards the western horizon there was a long line of faintly yellowish light, and through the afternoon hours, while Lil lingered there, it broadened and deepened. Presently a faint breath of air began stirring, breathing on her face so gently she hardly felt it, but it came again and again, always soft, yet growing steadily stronger. The long line of light began to arch upwards, and below it, pale and delicate, showed the heaven's own blue. The tide was flowing in, and the wind seemed to rise with it and like it, gentle, but strong and irresistible. The grey cloud lifted more and more, the blue below grew brighter and clearer, till at last the grey pall was drawn away over more than half the heavens, and the sun began to set in a sky of blue and gold, dotted with flecks of fleecy clouds.

Lil gazed at the pageant as though she saw it not, yet some of the beauty and the peacefulness of it entered into her heart and mind.

The sun sank lower and lower behind the Cheshire hills across the river, and brighter and brighter flamed the sky.

The water caught and shared the glowing splendor that lit every tiniest cloud with crimson, pink, or gold. The ships stood out intensely black, with every spar and line defined where they showed against the sky, or moved across the shining pathway of the water. The very air seemed colored; even the gulls' wings caught the rosy flush as they turned in their flight.

It did not last long. Lil stayed till the sun was gone, and the strange sudden glory had faded as swiftly as it came. She rose then, all cramped and chilled with her long waiting. With a strange cry she stretched her arms towards the dying light. "I don't grudge it him — no, I don't!" she said, with a half-sob not wholly bitter, and then turned slowly to go back to the wretched little room which she called home.

Her shortest way after she left the docks lay along narrow back streets, but to-night for some reason — perhaps that she might still glance back at river and sky — she took a longer way, by a wide street that led into another, where were many shops and much traffic. A strange quiet filled her mind; some burden seemed to have fallen off, some tight bond to have broken from round her heart as she uttered those words just now. Her limbs ached, she was very cold, but she hardly knew it.

As she turned into the street of shops, they were just beginning to light up, both within the shops and outside. Were her eyes dazzled, or was that little Tim she saw across the way, so far from home, and playing happily on the pavement? Yes, it was Tim, but he was not alone; she could see his mother getting served inside a small grocer's shop. No doubt he had run out unseen by her, and Lil stood and watched the child, with something really dazzling and dimming her eyes now.

Suddenly he caught sight of her; his face beamed all over with smiles. "Lil! Lil!" he shouted. She could hear him above all the noise and bustle, and then, as she did not come to him, he started off — he was always a bold child — to cross the crowded roadway to come to her.

There was a sudden louder noise of rattling wheels and galloping feet, a shout from behind it, "Stop him — stop him!" and Lil saw a runaway cart and horse tearing down the street, the people wildly clearing out of the way on all sides, and little Tim alone in the midst. There was a cry from many voices. Lil had thrown herself into the road — yes, she had reached him — Tim was in her arms — she had flung him aside — then a slip, a

crash, the noise of a great shout, a grinding agony of pain for an instant, and then — silence.

"What is it?" asked some one of a policeman some ten minutes after, when the crowd began to move off.

"It's a gell been run over," said the officer briskly, shutting up the note-book in which he had entered the name of the driver and owner of the peccant cart. "'Twas a plucky thing too. A little chap was out there in the street, and a runaway came along — driver been drinking, as usual. She snatched up the child, but her foot slipped, and another cart came round the corner, and there — well, she hadn't a chance," ended the officer, with an expressive shrug of the shoulders.

"Is the child hurt?"

"Not a scratch; but the gell's done for. 'Twas her stepbrother, folks are saying, but I don't know. A 775, he knows; he's gone down to the hospital with them."

It seemed very long to Mrs. Henderson watching by the little white bed where Lil lay, before her eyes opened and she faintly tried to move her head, but really it was not much more than an hour.

Wonderingly she looked at the group round her. Mrs. Henderson, with Tim in her arms, her comely face all pale and drawn; Mrs. Evans, her apron to her eyes; Mrs. Skinner, crying too. What had brought them all, and where was she? Who were these strangers, too, who looked at her pityingly?

"Where is it?" she whispered, her eyes turning to Mrs. Henderson and imploring an answer even more than her lips.

"It's the hospital, dear." But before she could add more Lil started at her words.

"Oh, is it for Tim? Was Tim hurt?" she cried.

Alas, the start and the effort brought on a terrible agony of pain, it was many minutes before she could hear her stepmother's answer. "No, dear Lil, no. Tim's not hurt; you saved him, Lil. God bless you."

But a faint smile crossed Lil's lips as the words at last reached her ears. "I remember," she said simply. "I'm glad."

For a little time she lay very still, and the watchers could almost see life ebbing out before their eyes. But she revived again.

"Is this dying? Am I killed?" she

asked presently, and as for all answer Mrs. Evans burst into a noisy fit of sobbing, and no one else spoke, a feeble gleam of amusement played over the white face. "It's a fine clean place for the likes of me to die in," she said.

There was a stir among the watchers. The doctor moved away.

"It won't last long," he murmured to the nurse, as he left to see some other patient, and a noiseless hand put up a screen around the bed.

"Is father there?" asked Lil anxiously, as she heard the slight movement. "Do get him to come — do!"

"We've sent for him, dear. He'll be here directly, Lil, if they can find him," said Mrs. Henderson, kneeling down by the low bed, still with Tim in her arms.

"Oh, Lil — Lil! whatever shall I do? Oh, if only I'd seen him run out!" she cried bitterly. "I'd taught him to call you!"

"Never — you — mind," muttered Lil. "I — I ain't o' much good." Her words came with great panting gasps between them now. "Let Tim kiss me. Kiss me, Tim."

The little fellow, awed into stillness, leant over from his mother's arms. "Poor, poor," he said when he kissed her, his little hand patting her cheek, and Lil lay looking at him with such peace on her face as had hardly rested there in all her short life before.

"Is — is — father —" she asked again presently, but could not finish, for the gasping sobs returned.

"No dear, not yet; he'll be here directly."

"Tell him," — they could hardly catch the words now — "tell him — I — I didn't grudge — no more —"

"What's she say, poor dear?" said Mrs. Skinner curiously. "I can't 'ear 'er." And Lil's stepmother bent down closer yet to catch the words.

"Tell him," — it was a last effort; she almost raised herself upon the pillow, and her voice came clearer and stronger — "tell father — I saved little Tim — for him."

Her eyelids closed — fluttered — closed again — and stirred no more. The angel of death — nay, let us say rather of new life — stood beside the bed, and on Lil's face there dawned to welcome him that true peace, that close-lipped smile, that pale still light, which we on earth see nowhere save on the face of the dead.

From Temple Bar.

ABOUT TWO GREAT NOVELISTS.

BY HERMAN MERIVALE.

AUTHOR OF "FAUCIT OF BALLIOL," ETC.

"FOUR-AND-TWENTY dear little girls! They must have four-and-twenty bright little sixpences!" It was at the Exhibition of 1862 that the scene was laid, and the speaker was a tall and white-haired man, well known in the London world, who always treated me like a boy of his own, and has left with me a memory of affection as well as pride, which sanctifies the past to me in its way, and remains what the Greeks called a *κτημα ἐς αἰε* — a possession forever — or as much of "ever" as may fall to my share. He had taken me to the Exhibition to induct me into its wonders, then, as I was, a youngster fresh from Oxford, full of curious interest in that palace of the Arabian Nights. It was, no doubt, in grace and beauty of form unable to bear comparison with its predecessor of 1851, even as the eleven years that divided the two had been enough to upset all the rosy auguries of the Age of Universal Peace which the first Exhibition ushered in. Wars — wars — and rumors of wars. We seem to have lived on nothing else ever since. We are living amongst them now. Only the other day I was going over an interesting exhibition of surgery at Wiesbaden. On entering the town, I had been struck with the streets, which were hung everywhere with flags of all colors, but chiefly black. I asked who was coming, expecting some Hapsburgs or Romanoffs — or Battenbergs, at the very least. But no, it was a congress of doctors, four hundred of whom from all parts of Germany were that day descending on the town, which had, therefore, apparently gone into mourning beforehand. Certainly that grim show of surgery bore out the idea; for among appliances, many and various, the main exhibits were new and strange devices, for the cure of new and strange wounds, to be inflicted in the future by new and strange weapons. It was a sight to make one very grave; a subject on which, beyond all other writers, the friend whom I am introducing would have been powerful to moralize. His influence over me has been very great, and when he treated of a subject, it was his habit to begin with a digression. My readers will have perceived that it is likewise mine. It is a pleasant way of letting down an audience easily.

Well, in that year of grace, 1862, the

anatomy of murder had not made much progress as a fine art, though there was some show of promise, as far as I remember, about the cannon-balls and other elementary bungles. The prevailing look was peace, and it could not have been better illustrated than by the four-and-twenty burnished little faces of small girls dressed in grey, who were being conducted in a two-and-two line through all the marvels by their teachers, with very round eyes very wide open, and very fat forefingers going very straight for anything they were particularly warned not to touch. My stout old friend's attention was at once diverted from all other sources of interest. He spoke to the teachers, counted the heads, and stopped the procession. It was not enough for him that they should have sixpence apiece, to spend each upon a favorite fancy. He must himself get the full change in new sixpences, and personally present each baby with her particular coin and particular pat on the head. So said, so done; and it was like looking at one of Leech's pictures to see the same procession trotting off, this time in a picturesque disorder which rather baffled the teachers, with a view to investing their capital in such securities as might seem to them respectively the soundest. If the kindness of an action may be tested by the pleasure it gives, Sterne's recording angel had a good time over this one. How much it pleased the giver, I guessed from the moisture on his spectacles. If I had worn a pair, I doubt if they would have been quite dry. This is my most characteristic memory of a man who was not only, as all know, one of the greatest and wisest of Englishmen, but was also — what all do *not* know — one of the very kindest-hearted. He had his enemies, of course. What man of that kidney has not? I have been tempted to versify that feeling in a couplet of my own.

Who makes no enemies, shall know no friends:

"A real good chap," men say: — and there it ends.

Yes; if the man of whom I am speaking made his enemies, he made his friends everywhere, as only an author has the privilege to make them, among thousands who never saw his face. What amongst those who knew it so closely as I? For most of my readers will have guessed by this time that I have been after all speaking to my text, of a novelist whose name was Thackeray.

Now it is a matter of some value that any man, whether he is addressing his audience on paper or from a platform, should as far as he can "talk" to his audience, take them into his confidence, and make himself at home with them. Of all men, Thackeray did that the best. Let a man put as much as he can of his own self into his work, not vainly, as an egoist, but familiarly, as an egoist (perhaps a distinction without a difference) and he is likely to get a key to their hearts and minds which greater men may miss. I speak only of prose writers. Poets who talk of themselves are a bore. And it is because so many of our latter-day poets seem never to think of anything else, that I cannot much believe in Victorian poetry. The greatest poets are absolutely impersonal. Shakespeare was everybody, from Othello to Dogberry; a figure as veiled and grand as *Æschylus* or *Isaiah*; and the result is that, marvellous and many-coursed as was the immortal banquet that he served up for men, there are people at this moment who maintain that the entire meal consisted of Bacon. Good heavens! that an appreciable number of our fellow-creatures in these busy times, should have so little to think about or to do. On myself, who am dangerously fond of my shell, it comes with a certain sense of restful relief, like a village without a telegraph office. But the Titans of the world have been very few, to be counted on the fingers of one hand. And in their shadowy presence even a Thackeray takes off his hat, as Thackeray was the first to feel. For as with nearly all men of real greatness, his was a humble mind. In the way of immortality, he has his advantage over the Titans. He will be with men always, even as he is now, in his habit as he lived. And nobody will be able to maintain two hundred years hence, with any show of likelihood, that in the intervals of Homer and telegrams his novels were written by Mr. Gladstone.

For Thackeray, I repeat, was one of the greatest of the egoists, and nothing to my mind more distinguishes him amongst men than that he was a great creator too. No man could talk to you more familiarly in pen and ink; no man could sink himself in his characters more entirely when he chose. He was not the least like Rawdon Crawley, or Jack Costigan, or Colonel Newcome either; and perhaps the best criticism I ever heard on the last was made, quite unconsciously, by a long-headed man of business and man of the world, after reading "The New-

comes." He was furious with the colonel. "A miserable, impudent swindler," he said, "ruining hundreds out of sheer swagger, and posing for the simple-minded, and charitable, and all that sort of thing!" Precisely: that was the very judgment passed by the characters in the book of the class of my angry friend upon the character of the colonel. It was just as the colonel's creator meant it should be. To others, as to himself, it was to carry a different meaning.

Perhaps the truest test of greatness in a novelist is simply this — whether his characters live or no. I do not want to go into conundrums of art, and enquire, for instance, whether Dickens's characters (being, as some say, mere caricatures, or, at the best, the incarnations of a single quality — as Pecksniff of hypocrisy, Martin Chuzzlewit of self, etc.), ought to live or not. Probably most people oughtn't. But they do. Not so long as Sam Weller, though. Apply this test, however — living names are to be avoided — and how few our great novelists have been. Strong novelists have failed to create character, and mild ones have succeeded. Charlotte Bronte was strong, but *Jane Eyre* is an abstraction. Jane Austen was mild, but *Emma Woodhouse* is a reality. Charles Reade was strong, a master of English, and a splendid story-teller; but, somehow, there is already a kind of consent that he was not a great novelist — even as Charlotte Bronte wasn't, though Jane Austen was. Trollope was mild, and dull to many, as Jane Austen is, because he drew such every-day and still-life pictures. He wrote too much besides, altogether. But the Proudis and the Grantleys are men and women for all that; while Reade's hot-blooded youngsters, and high-spirited girls, attractive as they are, seem all cut to his own one pattern. He could not create. Therefore a Trollope, on the weaker wing, may rise into the calendar yet, where a Reade may not be. After Shakespeare, our largest creator has been Walter Scott.

But I am running into criticism, and that will not do. As Mark Twain says of Benjamin Franklin, who prided himself on having come to Philadelphia with half-a-crown in his pocket, "When you come to think of it, anybody can do that." And it is no good that I know of. My criticism, like everybody's, is what I think — and we invent our thinking, very often, as we go along. Nor shall I convert anybody. Those among my readers who agree with my profound remarks will hold me

for a wise critic. Those who do not will opine that I am an ass. And, from their several points of view, both will be right. Let us go forth, then, and buy our criticisms. There are plenty about; the great thing being to find the opinions which agree with our own. Whatever they may be, we shall find them if we know where to go.

As for me, I am really nothing if not a gossip, I believe, outside my own especial work. It is a truer and kinder word than egoist perhaps. Discourse I must, whatever my theme, or die for it. Any reader of mine must expect rather to be entertained than instructed; for the first, I confess, my little efforts aim. I feel myself to be a failure from the point of view of culture, the goddess of the age, who is as hazy as Isis to me. I can't make out what she wants, except attitudes; and my impression of her is that she doesn't take enough exercise in the fresh air. I cannot see why we should trouble over "one hundred books" more than over ninety-nine or one hundred and one. I am inclined to define the one hundred books as those which everybody says everybody else must read, but never reads himself. My enjoyment has been got out of life by trying everything all round. "Augur, schœnobates, medicus, magus, omnia novit, Græculus esuriens." I have been guilty of every form of play, from blank-verse tragedy to burlesque. I have been a poet and a song-writer, serious and satirical. I have been a novelist, journalist, essayist, and travel-talker, and fairy-tale-teller. I have been a barrister on circuit and standing counsel for a government office, a boundary commissioner, a plaintiff, a defendant, an amateur actor, a stump orator, the president of a county caucus, a lecturer, a theatrical manager, an editor, and an egg-merchant. In some of these lines I have had some success—in others I have been a failure; as an egg-merchant conspicuously so. Yet perhaps the proudest moment of my life was when I was able to enter myself by the last description in a census-paper. It looked so solid—but it wasn't.

Seriously, however, this very variety of life has been to me a curious education of its kind; which through circumstances has brought me into personal contact with famous men the most diverse in all lines, almost from boyhood, as I have written in an earlier essay of them here. It is something to have played, as a child, with such a survival of the past as Joanna Baillie—something to have sate at the feet of Ma-

caulay—to have known foreign men of letters like De Tocqueville and Louis Blanc—something to owe the production of a first article to the kindness of Dickens—of a first play to that of Boucicault—of a first novel to that of Trollope. But Gossip Thackeray was my boy's idol, as of English novelists he remains to my maturer love the first; and it is to Gossip Thackeray that I am going for a while to take my readers back again, for he was of pen-and-ink gossips perhaps the greatest, when he chose to take up that side of his work. In the philosophical bits of his novels, in his odds and ends of sketch and travel, in his delightful "Roundabout Papers," he buttonholes us to our lasting content. Gossip Montaigne and Gossip Charles Lamb, who had no creative side, are not more delightful reading in that delightful specialty than he. It is much to be regretted, I think, that through a natural, though as I think mistaken feeling of his daughter's, rising from one hasty expression of his, no complete life of him has been or can be written. "None of this, when I die," he said impatiently over some body-snatching memoir of the pitiless modern type, and he has been obeyed. But I cannot believe from my knowledge of him but that, like other men, he would have wished to leave some proper and respectful record of his doughty deeds behind him. And a very Nemesis has now descended in just the publication of what he would most have hated—a collection of some of his most private letters, written in the most trustful confidence to a friend. Little hasty remarks on men who may be pained to read them—all his frank little egotisms about his work and himself, lie unburied there. To me and to most who knew him, an unneeded and unkindly pain. But to some who did not, I am bound to add, a new revelation of the true loveliness of the man, which from his books with all their admiration they had failed to gather. If so the publication has not been in vain, and it will be better still if it should lead, before too late, to the issue of a full biography, as all must hope it will. There is no cause for scruple left.

The power of talking to an audience Gossip Thackeray had curiously. Like so many literary men, he was once bitten by the political gadfly. Like most of them, he soon recovered from the bite, though unlike a certain man of letters of the present day, with whom the results have been, and are, rather mixed. Thackeray stood for Parliament at Oxford, and

was, happily for himself and mankind, beaten by Mr. Cardwell, one of those amiable and appropriate politicians who do no particular harm or good where they are, and are therefore better there. He had to give a lecture directly on his return to London, and all were anxious to hear if he would make any allusions to his campaign. Very quietly and confidentially he beamed through his spectacles, and began.

"Walking, the other day," he said, "down the High Street of a certain ancient city —" and the roar of laughter made lecturer and audience close allies at once. "Nothing like a dramatic surprise to begin with," he used to say. Like all good and unspoiled souls, he loved "the play." Asking a listless friend one day if he liked it, he got the usual answer, "Ye-es — I like a good play." "Oh! get out," said Thackeray. "I said *the* play; you don't even understand what I mean." He liked to hear the fiddlers tune up, and to be well set in his place before each act began, and see it all out. What a contrast to certain products of the present day, who make the stalls look more "vacant" when they are occupied than when they are not — come in when the second act is half over and hopelessly wonder what the story's about, though they wouldn't have understood it if they'd heard it all; and are the despair of such play-writers and actors as still believe in the old-fashioned realism of "real laughter" and "real tears."

No playgoer of this class was Gossip Thackeray. When a mere slip of a boy, I remember his asking me and a brother boy who was staying at my father's house (just like him — he invited me, and when I hinted at a guest he said, "Oh, bring him too — bring six boys if you've got them, I love boys") to dine with him at the old historic Garrick in King Street, and to go afterwards to another extinct institution — the Victoria in the New Cut — Queen Victoria's own theatre as Mrs. Brown called it — to see the transpontine melodrama of the day. No need to cross the bridges for it now; for in the revolution of things theatrical, the simple old Surrey drama has migrated bodily into Middlesex, virtuous hero, oppressed maiden and all, and taken the place of the West End melodrama by contrast that used to be, the more elaborate play of the type of "The Dead Heart" or of the "Colleen Bawn." Our host delighted more than his young guests did, I think, in the actions and passions of "the Vic." We were just old enough to resent such a "tissue

of improbabilities from beginning to end," as the late Baron Martin once described "Romeo and Juliet." Not so the novelist, who would rather have written a melodrama than "Vanity Fair," I believe. He was always wanting to write plays. Novelists are. Were I to reveal the secrets of the prison-house, I should astonish the world with the eminent and successful names among living authors, whose owners have come to me mysteriously with MSS., and asked me in confidence if they "would do for the stage." Well, they would, for the time, for the stage they were produced on; do for it altogether. So they go home and set down that there is no drama. On the other hand, dramatists want to write novels. It is always so. Among the philosophers I have met (I love them, for I forgot to mention that I am a philosopher amongst the other things) the greatest was a hair-dresser. When it reaches a certain length my hair begins to turn up at the ends, my sign that it wants cutting. At one such crisis I went to that man.

"How much off?" he said.

"Down to the curls," I said; "they worry me."

He looked at me very gravely for a moment.

"It's very odd, sir," he observed. "Yesterday I was at a gentleman with the irons for half-an-hour, trying to make him some curls like yours. I think the world's divided between gentlemen whose hair curls when they want it straight, and gentlemen whose hair's straight when they want it to curl." Oh wonderful philosopher! All life in one sentence, from a professional point of view.

Thackeray's hair was of that loveliest shade in man; fine of texture and of pure white silk. In his deep interest in the sufferings of Queen Victoria's own heroine, he was leaning over the dress-circle with his head between his hands (there were no stalls at the Vic). A Vickite from the gallery took steady aim, and expected exactly in the middle of it. The dear old man did not look up. He merely had recourse to his handkerchief, and observed, "The heathen gods, I believe, never used to do that." Ah! that was an Ambrosian night. I have had some of them, in my time, with some of the choice spirits of the past, for whom there is nothing now, I think, but day. For him, at least; if light has ever been. When he treated boys, it was with no ungenerous views about bed. After the play he carried us off to Evans's to be greeted by

Paddy Green with "Dear boy, dear boy," to eat such baked potatoes as never have been baked since, and listen well into the small hours to the divine voices of the boys, in a framework of rich portraiture of bygone heroes of the stage. How Thackeray loved the boys' voices! how Thackeray, again, would have moralized over dead-and-gone Paddy Green, and Evans's pure and wholesome atmosphere. Play-taken boys cannot breathe it now. It was our third lost landmark in one evening. The music-hall has taken the place of Evans's, on whose masculine delights the fair sex (ladies, forgive me) were only allowed to gaze from a latticed balcony above — as they study masculine charity, and masculine good manners, in the House of Commons. And on the site which Evans's occupied, I believe, there flourishes one of the modern club temples dedicated to the goddess Culture with the side on, where amateurs in various walks may for the time imagine themselves professionals, and inadequate young persons of both sexes say their lessons to their elders with their backs against the wall — and call them recitations. I wonder what Thackeray would have thought of that new fashion — after the boys!

Some years afterwards, I asked my dear old host if he remembered our dining with him at the Garrick that night. "Oh, yes," he said, "and I remember what I gave you for dinner. Beefsteak and apricot omelette." I felt immensely pleased that he should remember us in such detail, and grew in my own esteem at once, and said so. "Yes," said he, twinkling in his inimitable way. "I always give boys beefsteak and apricot omelette." Small as this story is, it is rather to the point just now. For it is an exact specimen of the good-natured chaff in which Thackeray liked to indulge, particularly with youngsters, who loved him the better for it if they had any sense at all. Yet it is precisely what his detractors have called ill-nature, cynicism, and the Lord knows what.

Once, and once only, the great novelist had a play produced. It ran one night, and I had the honor of being among the players. For, in truth, he had to do what lesser men than he have done, and produce it himself as his own manager. It was, in fact, an amateur performance by way of house-warming. The play had been submitted to Alfred Wigan, the comedy-manager of the day, who had decided that it was impossible for the stage. I think that Wigan was right. Needless to

say that it was splendidly written, and full of the touches of language and character which only its author could give. But there was a lack of dramatic incident and movement; the female characters were too many, and predominated too much; and the talk, good as it was, was book-talk rather than play-talk, a vital difference, and in itself a reason why the same man can so seldom excel, or even succeed, in the two branches of fiction. The late Lord Lytton, a distinguished exception, provided the peculiar playwrights who take advantage of a defect in the law to prey upon the work of others and call themselves authors, with more plots than anybody except Scott, Dickens, and Miss Braddon, or the luckless Ouida. Yet he, himself the skilful author of three standard plays, never dramatized any of his own novels. He recognized the essential difference. Thackeray turned a bad play into a capital story called "Lovel the Widower," and it suited the narrative form admirably. I feel sure that if a man is to succeed in the two lines, even though he may use the same plot, he should write his play and his novel quite independently. If you want to be a good novelist, don't make a novel out of a play. If you want to be a good dramatist, reverse the receipt.

I have the Thackeray playbill before me as I write.

W. EMPTY HOUSE THEATRICALS.

NEVER ACTED.

On Monday and Tuesday, Feb. 24 and 25, 1862,

Will be presented a New Comedy, in 2 Acts, called —

"The Wolves and the Lamb."*

Then follows the cast — including, with myself, my old college friend Sir Charles Young, who, in the irony of fate, died only the other day, just after fulfilling a life-long dream, and being numbered among the successful dramatists as author of "Jim the Penman;" Morgan John O'Connell, the Liberator's son; Follett Syngé, a literary man himself of note, and once our minister at the Sandwich Islands, a good old friend of mine only now struck down by illness; Quintin Twiss, of the Kemble blood, the first amateur low comedian of his day; Mrs. Caulfield, since well known

* Here I may add the oddest instance of "unconscious cerebration." The hero is "Mr. Milliken." I have used the very name for a new comedy just coming out at Toole's, and thought it was new. I remembered it, of course, unconsciously.

as Lady Charlemont; two daughters of Sir Henry Cole, the hero of the South Kensington Museum, and inspirer of a famous parody in *Punch*, —

I built my Cole a lordly treasure-house;

Thackeray's youngest daughter, who afterwards became the wife of Leslie Stephen, and has long since joined the majority with her father — alas! for she was a rare inheritor of his graceful humor; and last, not least, the great man himself. He declined a "speaking part" on the ground that he couldn't possibly learn such poor words, and only appeared as the clerical papa, just before the fall of the curtain, to hold out his hands and say, "Bless you, my children," in pantomime, to actors and audience. And a pretty, gracious, memorable sight, and a sound of much applause and no little tearfulness it was when Thackeray so came forward to welcome his friends and guests, for the first time, to the new house he had just built himself on Palace Green. I said it was a house-warming, and the place was still unfurnished except for the occasion. Hence the W. Empty House, which has probably puzzled my readers even more than it puzzled the company. Of all things Thackeray loved a pun — and the worse it was, the better he loved it. He drew up his playbill himself, and two things he insisted on. First that there must be an announcement to this effect — "During this piece the theatre will *not* be perfumed by Rimmel's patent vaporizer" — an invention which at that period was stupefying half the theatres in London — and, secondly, that W. Empty House must head the bill. Humbly I tried to persuade the great man that the joke was unworthy of him; but he insisted that it was very much wittier than anything in the play, and he would have it. W. M. T. were his initials, that is all. Dear old kindly child!

The play closed with a graceful rhymed epilogue of his own (unpublished, I believe, as I can't find it), through which he promised that, in his new house, he "hoped to raise two or three *stories* more."

Not much of that was to be. I was in Devonshire, and was to have returned to dine with him at Christmas-tide, when that season was saddened for all men by the sudden news of his death. What such losses these are to the world, we know. What they are to friends and children (and he treated me like one of his own) it is of little use to say. No mightier intellect or

nobler heart than that ever went out into the void, if, as some of us may fancy, void there be. He did not think so. Nor do I. God bless his name forever, and keep his memory green.

Of the usual criticisms, obituaries, and other outpourings which followed Thackeray's death, one was noteworthy. It was by Anthony Trollope, who had known him but a short time, having, it is worth remembering, written his first serial for the opening numbers of the *Cornhill Magazine*, at the request of Thackeray, the original editor. Of Thackeray, the man, he said one very true thing — that those who loved him felt for him something of the tenderness which attached to their feeling for a woman. That was so; and it was, I think, because he had in himself something of a woman's tender delicacy, something that approaches the untranslatable *Ewigweiblichkeit* of the second part of "Faust." When one was with him it was impossible not to feel it. It had its little touch of petulance, too. Of Thackeray, the author, Trollope said another thing, true and acute — that he possessed the conspicuous distinction of having written three novels equally great, favorites with different men in different gradations. With real critics (literary experts, I mean) "Esmond" was about the greatest of all novels. With the world at large "Vanity Fair." With personal friends "Pendennis." And I have found that estimate nearly always true.

It must have been by a kind of prescience that Thackeray, in his young and struggling days, called himself by the pen-name of "Michael Angelo" Titmarsh. For the impression which his novels leave upon the mind is curiously like that which, to those of us who have been students and lovers in the world of art, comes home in the work of Michael Angelo only. In one word — massiveness. The details are often wrong, careless, provoking even, and delightfully tempting to the little people who pick little holes, in the massive especially, where holes don't count. One of these gentlemen, supposed to be quite a great man in his way, finds serious fault, as I remember, with a magnificent sitting group of Michael Angelo's in one of the treasure-houses in Florence (the church of the Medici, I think), on the ground that in the niche in which it stands there is no room for the figures to stand up. One is reminded by such an idiotic criticism of Abernethy's famous answer to the lady who complained that her arm hurt her when she held it up. "Then why the

d—— do you?" Why the d—— should stone figures stand up when they're sitting down? With Thackeray, as with Michael Angelo, the art which conceals art is characteristic. The simplest of means produce the largest of effects. In the fewest words, in the plainest sentences, without the ghost of visible effort or the slightest strain after effect, Thackeray has in "Vanity Fair" given us the most living and Homeric picture of the Battle of Waterloo that exists. In scenes of domestic pathos, he is a household Æschylus at times. I know nothing of the one-hundred-book school, as I have said, and don't want to know anything. But if I were to advise those who are learned amongst us as to a course of study, I should select passages, I think, rather than books, for very especial attention. And I would have them know those passages almost by heart. Amongst them, for the simplicity of sublimity, for that same quality of massiveness, for homely pathos and quiet power, I would refer readers to one than which, I think, English prose can rise no higher. Of tears in the voice we have all heard; this I should call "tears in the pen." It is the story of the death of Helen Pendennis; where in the last and beautiful reconciliation between the estranged mother and son, he kneels like a child to say the Lord's Prayer at her feet, sobs out that wonderful message of love and faith to "generations of sinful and humbled men," and sees her die.

If Thackeray could write such prose as this, it is because he was a poet. Happy the novelist who has any of that sacred fire to keep alive in him, for he has ten chances to one in his favor against all comers, when it comes to a bid for greatness. Read George Eliot, Victor Hugo, Walter Scott. Beware how you mix prose with your poetry — but put all the poetry you can into your prose. Thackeray was no mere verse-writer; he was a poet. Helen Pendennis's death is poetry. Rather than dilate much upon the author, I have tried to show something of the man. The man himself, as I knew him, is in that passage. I know of nothing in English fiction more solemn and surprising. So fitly, so tenderly, let us part here with Thackeray.

We all know that there is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous. I am going to take that step, and wonder how it looks. But in my sense, it is but a step from the top of one mountain to the top of another, — twin peaks of Parnassus

— both mountains of one range. I know of no lesser interval than that between the sublime and the ridiculous, which can suggest the difference between Helen Pendennis and Sairy Gamp. "Who denies of it, Betsy?" God in his mercies — and there are plenty of them to praise him for, to carry us through this one-horse and incomplete sort of a place — be above all things praised for the infinite mercy of fun — and the capacity of understanding it. For mind and lungs there is no exercise like laughter. It is to the work of a literary man — ay, and of any man — like the dew that waters the earth. One can live on it, thrive on it, feed on it. Nothing does one's small vanities so much good, as a good laugh at oneself. And if blessed be he who can indulge in laughter, thrice blessed be he who can cause it, create it, conjure it up at will; discover ludicrous images in the dullest regions of commonplace, find preposterous analogies between the most discordant things, and revel out of very excess of mental health, in one incomparable peal of lifelong laughter. And if, in the material sense, there is to sensible mortals no deity but fun — of a surety Charles Dickens was its prophet. The man was fun. He died early — why, of course he did. The wonder is, that, created with such balloonfuls of laughter inside him, he didn't die of a kind of spontaneous combustion, long before. What he must have suffered inside whilst he was a baby, before he had learned to express himself! Somewhere have I read of a wag, who when one of the one-hundred-book gentlemen asked him for culture's sake what was his earliest memory, answered him gravely, that it was of thinking, when his nurse went for gin and water and left him alone in his cradle, "Oh, won't I tell my mother when I know how to talk!"

Baby Dickens must have reflected, when he was being treated for mysterious internal spasms, "Won't I give them 'Pickwick' as soon as I can write?" For he did about as soon. The literary creator, as a rule, flowers rather late. Observation of mankind is wanted, and it takes time. But Dickens was nothing if not spontaneous. When he took to writing with purposes, he was something of a bore till nature became too strong for him, and he burst out laughing in ink. When he took to making plots, he didn't make them well. With plot novelists, one always wants to know how it is going to end. And one begins with the last page of the last volume to find out; at least I do.

And if I don't like the end, I don't look at the beginning. I don't care to look for Dickens's ends. I don't want him to end at all. Why on earth "Pickwick" should ever have begun, is only less wonderful than why "Pickwick" should ever have finished.

Dickens was at his best when he was youngest, because he just took one central personage, and let his story and his adventures tell themselves, to end how and where they listed, or when he himself got tired of them. How I envy the generation which read "Pickwick" as it came out in numbers — and my father has told me that it was the phenomenon of the time. My grandfather's whole family of sons and daughters (a very large one, as for obvious reasons I wish to heaven it hadn't been) used to cluster round him, to hear him read number after number out to them. He always studied them to himself for an hour or two, in order to be able to read them aloud with decent gravity. And his apoplectic struggles and occasional shouts made them feel bad — longing for their turn. "I have nothing to live for till next month," was the habitual thought of many a hard-worked man, when he threw his "Pickwick" number aside.

In the matter of fiction, plays were the world's teachers once. Novels are now. I have no doubt that if Shakespeare had lived in Walter Scott's days — after Shakespeare, the first creative force in English letters — Shakespeare would have written novels. If Scott had lived in Shakespeare's, Scott would have written plays. For both the giants had both the gifts. In play form, the "Merchant of Venice" is a novel — in book form, "The Bride of Lammermoor" is a tragedy. I have tried it; and it runs into five acts and blank verse "all of itself," as the children say. But the books mould the world.

All education is books more or less. Mr. Forster's Education Act, the work of Lord Shaftesbury, and William Rogers, and Dickens's writings (for when I laughed about his "purposes," it was only in a literary sense) have done more for this country than all the political hullabalooing and banjo-beating put together. I am a gluttonous book-reader, and if I give hearers my counsel on the universal subject, it is this. Read everything that interests you; nothing that does not. And let the test of your interest be the attention you can pay. "Attention" is the watchword of all work, to learners. And we should all be learners, to the end. "Imparo an-

cora," I am learning still; said the old man Michael Angelo just before he died.

I have made my subject the excuse for giving readers some personal gossip about Thackeray. Let me add a little about Dickens. Dickens and Thackeray! what a noble pair of names! I protest that nothing in the world irritates me more, than the perpetual "comparisons" that are made between the two. Comparisons! You might as well "compare" Niagara and Mont Blanc, as far as I can see. Macedon and Monmouth had a river in both. In all respects the two men were as opposite as the poles. Thackeray was what is conventionally called a "gentleman" as well as a gentleman by instinct — a university man — and so forth. He lived an idle man's life till loss of money drove him to work, and he did not find his line for many years. He was, I think, thirty-eight when "Vanity Fair" made him a famous man. And his books and his creations live mainly through his marvellous observation and experience of society life.

Dickens was of the middle class, thrown into work early, and at his best at twenty-three. His creations are imaginations as much as Puck or Ariel. In the which sense, certainly, Dickens was a poet, too. He knew nothing of society, and cared less. Few things have been more unconsciously funny than his rather indignant rebuke of somebody who told him that he didn't know anything about lords, when he answered that Lord Chief Justice Cockburn was one of his greatest friends. Cockburn was of course "my lord" only in the legal sense, but one lord was as good to Dickens as another — in this case better. And perhaps he wasn't far wrong. Dickens's ladies and gentlemen were not the least like gentlemen and ladies — Thackeray's were the very thing. Dickens's characters are either black or white — Thackeray's are the grey mixture. Thackeray was the mighty master of that kind of humor whose brightest laughter has a touch of tears — Dickens was the master of its other side, which turns straight to the fun-god, and suffereth not its god to be eclipsed. Of what use he was to me not long ago, when I happened to be alone with my thoughts and a county directory for an hour or two, in a depressing country inn where I tried for a kind of tea-meal! I gazed on my butter and my toast with fear, then remembered Dickens, and burst out laughing. He had hit it exactly, and made fun out of the stupid thing. The little pat of butter, decked with much

parsley, and protected from the flies, was "Moses in the bulrushes, confined with strong precautions under an iron cover" and the toast was "a proof impression of the bars of the fireplace" on a very old and pronounced piece of bread.

Dickens and Thackeray! Giants of the giants!—no wonder that they stop the way. They had no gift for fiction in common, except the parent gift of genius; between them, as it seems to me, they exhausted all the gifts of fiction altogether. My father, to those who knew him, was remarkable for the widest and deepest knowledge, almost, of his time. A friend of his, Vice-Chancellor Wickens, had the same reputation. As a boy, I remember another distinguished and dear old friend of mine, Mr. Hughes, of "Tom Brown" fame, contemplating those two strolling together along the Cromer beach, and saying: "There goes the sum of human knowledge. There is nothing on earth that one of those two men doesn't know." So say I of Dickens and Thackeray: "There is nothing in fiction that one of those men couldn't do." More was impossible. Nature could not contrive them in one.

My first sight of Dickens was characteristic enough. I was in the second or third row of seats with some friends, at one of his readings of "Oliver Twist." As Thackeray was a gossip on the platform, so Dickens was an actor. Like all speakers and actors, he longed for sympathy somewhere; an unanswering audience kills us, on whichever side the fault may lie. In the days of my political measles I have harangued a London audience for an hour and twenty minutes when I have meant to speak for a quarter of an hour; and in an out-of-the-way Hampshire district, where I had gone on purpose to address the rurals for a set hour, I have sat down, covered with confusion, in ten minutes, not being able to hit on anything that interested them at all. I saw too plainly, in all their good-natured faces, that they regarded me as the greatest ass they had ever seen, or as an odd kind of cow gone wrong, and of no use to the three acres. Dickens's audience that night was dull, and he became so, too. I was disappointed. His characters were not lifelike, and his acting was not good, and got worse as he went on. It was the inevitable law of reaction. His audience bored him, and he began to bore me, amongst the rest. He was not "in touch" with us, that is all; and his eye wandered as hopelessly in search of some sympathetic eye to catch

them, as the gladiator's of old for mercy in the circus. Then, suddenly, at one point of his reading, he had to introduce the passing character of a nameless individual in a London crowd, a choleric old gentleman who has only one short sentence to fire off. This he gave so spontaneously, so inimitably, that the puppet became an absolute reality in a second. I saw him, crowd, street, man, temper, and all. For I am, I may say, what is called a very good audience. I like what I like, and I hate what I hate; and on one occasion growled at the theatre so audibly at what I thought some very bad acting that I began to hear ominous cries of "Turn him out!" It was the first night of one of my own plays. Dickens's electric flash bowled me over so completely and instantly that I broke into a peal of laughter, and, as we sometimes do when hard hit, kept on laughing internally, which is half tears, and half hiccough, for some time afterwards. Upon my word I am laughing now, as I recall it. It was so funny. The audience of course glared at me with the well-known look of rebuke. "How dare you express your feelings out loud, and disturb us?" But Dickens's eye—I wasn't much more than a boy, and he didn't know me from Adam—went at once straight for mine. "Here's somebody who likes me, anyhow," it said. For the next few minutes he read at me, if ever man did. The sympathetic unit is everything to us. And on my word the result was that he so warmed to his work that he got the whole audience in his hand, and dispensed with me. Only once again—oh, how like him it was!—he fixed me with his eye just towards the end of the reading, and made a short but perceptible pause. I wondered what was coming—and soon knew. The choleric old party in the street had to appear for one passing instant more, and fire off one more passing sentence. Which he did—with the same results. Good heavens! what an actor Dickens was.

When that reading ended—with the success which it deserved—never did that most expressive of all human features, the eye, thank a boy more expressively. Over all things cultivate sympathy. If antipathy goes with it, so much the better. If the magnet must attract, it must likewise repel. Dickens was a magnet of the magnets; but in his case I must confess, that when a modern specimen tells me he can't laugh at him, he makes me feel rather as Heine felt when somebody told him that he—the somebody—was

an atheist; frightened. A languishing British lady, beautifully dressed, was taken to a well-known English wine-shop in Boulogne, to be restored. "You *must* have some brandy." "Has he got any ginger-brandy?" "No — I haven't." "Has he got any cherry-brandy?" "No — I haven't." "Has he got any very mild brandy?" "No — I haven't." "Has he got any of Martell's three-stars brandy?" "No — I haven't." "Oh Lord! what *has* he got?" Can't he laugh at Dickens? Oh Lord! what *can* he laugh at? Dickens is perhaps best described as to my immense amusement, and by the most delicious misprint I ever saw, I found myself once described in the "Visitors' List" in an English paper abroad — "Human Marvel, and family." It looked like some new kind of acrobat. Of Charles Dickens's great kindness to me in after days, and of some personal experiences of his stage passion, at the end of his life, I ventured to gossip with readers of the *Bar*, some months ago, in a paper called "With the Majority." In one sense, yes; but in another — in what a minority, Thackeray and he!

From Macmillan's Magazine.

A VISIT TO THE MONASTERY OF RILO.

WHEN the long-desired railway through Bulgaria is completed, it is possible that an excursion to the monastery of Rilo will form part of the programme of every well-conducted tourist who pauses at Sofia on his journey overland to Constantinople. Meanwhile as few strangers find their way to this comparatively unknown and remote spot, a short account of a visit there during the past autumn may perhaps have some interest for prospective British travellers.

The journey from Sofia to Rilo occupies two days, Dubnitza being the most convenient place at which to pass the night; and the usual vehicle employed is the small victoria so extensively patronized in the Balkan Peninsula. These carriages, drawn by four of the little native horses harnessed abreast, will triumphantly surmount places which no English driver in possession of his senses would ever dream of attempting; while the distances covered in days of continuous driving are marvellous to any one who has seen the roads.

Our party, which consisted of three persons (one a lady), occupied two of these carriages, and we were accompanied by

two retainers; one a native *cavass*, Dimi-tri by name, well known as a fire-eater in Sofia, and the other a dirty little Levantine interpreter, speaking about a dozen languages equally ill, whose sole equipment for the journey appeared to consist of a box of cigarettes.

The road to Rilo is no better than those in the less-frequented parts of Bulgaria; for although it starts fairly well, and with a certain amount of pretension, the usual characteristics of the water-course are soon developed, and the track eventually becomes almost imperceptible to the naked eye — a thing to be taken entirely on trust. But bad as the road is, it is also very interesting to the tourist not already satiated with Eastern travel and ready to hail with delight the innumerable signs which remind him that the well-worn track of the stereotyped Continental tour has for once been abandoned.

Our route lay through a mountainous and thinly peopled district, where few human habitations, with the exception of some little wayside *Haus*, were to be seen. Soon after leaving Sofia the road passed near a half-finished railway embankment, one of the monuments of Turkish rule, and, like many another Turkish enterprise of the same kind, doomed to a natural death long before it was given any chance to justify its existence. Near Dubnitza the country became richer and appeared to be more carefully cultivated, while we met increasing numbers of peasants, some with strings of pack-horses loaded with grapes on their way to Sofia, and others going to or returning from their field-work in heavy *arabas*, guiltless of any vestige of iron, and mostly drawn by buffaloes. It is worthy of remark that the Bulgar, who is frequently accused of uncouth barbarism, treats his womankind better than the other natives of the Balkan Peninsula, and in almost every case it is the man who walks and the women and children who drive. Bearing in mind, however, the nature of the araba, it is perhaps doubtful whether the man has in reality the worst of the arrangement.

The two mounted *gendarmes* who, out of respect for the high official rank of my friend, constituted our guard of honor, appeared to derive the utmost satisfaction from ordering the owners of these carts out of the way; and it was perfectly astonishing to see the places which these primitive vehicles managed to negotiate successfully, though not without many an expostulatory creak and groan.

Outside Dubnitza our guards were

joined by others, and as the now imposing procession jolted at a foot's pace through the ill-paved main street, the inhabitants, flocking out of their abodes, saluted us with obsequious civility. In front of the house, which by order of the government had been prepared for our reception, stood the prefect, an important-looking little man wearing a military uniform of Russian cut. This gentleman was civility personified, but unfortunately spoke only Bulgarian and Turkish, and as our interpreter was highly inefficient conversation proved a work of considerable difficulty, taking the form of Ollendorffian questions and answers of a forced and pointless description. It was not therefore without a sense of relief that we understood him to decline an invitation to dinner.

The house in which we were accommodated was a wooden structure, poorly furnished in a half-European fashion. It was said to be the property of a citizen who had got himself into political trouble. Some weeks afterwards, when visiting the convict prison at Sofia, one of the men condemned to death approached, and with tears in his eyes informed me that he was the owner of the house in question, and hoped that our party had passed a comfortable night there. The "political trouble" proved to be participation in the murders committed during the election riots at Dubnitza in the previous year. Such are the incidents which remind the traveller from time to time that Bulgaria is still passing through what may euphemistically be termed a transition stage.

Dubnitza still remains a town of thoroughly Oriental appearance, but I observed that pioneers of civilization in the shape of sewing-machines were to be found in some of the houses; and I regretted also to notice that many of the boys were dressed in what purported to be jackets and trousers. However, although the leaders of fashion in Bulgaria may adopt clothes of foreign cut, they are much too acute to indulge in foreign stuffs, and remain faithful to their own hand-spun cloth, unrivalled for wear and tear.

Dubnitza also enjoys a certain reputation as the home of numerous brigands, and its proximity to the Macedonian frontier enables them to indulge in their occupation with great facility and little risk. During the Servian war a large contingent of what may be called amateur brigands was raised in this district, and under the leadership of a certain well-known Captain Panitzza is said to have done good service.

My friend and I before starting on our expedition had thought it advisable to consult the prime minister with reference to possible adventures, and his answer was to the effect that, as the leaves were still on the trees, there was no danger to be apprehended. He subsequently lightened our perplexity by explaining that when the leaves began to show the authorities laid hands upon all potential brigands and deported them to another part of the country; but that when the trees were bare it was considered that the inhabitants could without difficulty look after themselves, and the brigands were consequently allowed to return. It struck me, on hearing this statement, that the inhabitants in question must look forward to the fall of the leaf with considerably more interest than is generally bestowed on that commonplace operation of nature. In point of fact, it is pretty well known that men who are considered and treated as brigands when in Turkey are often looked upon as meritorious citizens in the neighboring Balkan states, should circumstances necessitate a return to their native country.

Soon after leaving Dubnitza, within about two miles of the Turkish frontier, a magnificent mountain view over Macedonia is suddenly disclosed. In the foreground, on Bulgarian territory, stretches a plain of extraordinary fertility, on which tobacco, rice, the vine, and many kinds of fruits and vegetables grow in the utmost luxuriance. Nearly every house hereabouts is festooned with the drying leaves of the tobacco-plant. The road traverses this plain, and after passing through the little town of Rilski Selo, suddenly enters the gorge of Rilo. Only a very slight efforts of the imagination is here needed to fancy oneself suddenly transported into a Swiss Alpine valley. But it is Switzerland without its drawbacks. There are the same precipitous crags and gigantic heights, the same rushing torrent, the same pines and firs clothing the mountain-side, the same bells tinkle on cattle and goats, and even the repulsive *goitre* occasionally helps to complete the illusion. But no bedizened peasants blowing impossible horns appeal to your generosity; no touts proffer their unwelcome services; and at the end of your pilgrimage there is no hotel-keeper, swollen with ill-gotten prosperity, who suffers you, as a gracious favor, to enter his extortionate abode.

It is a four hours' steep and difficult drive up the valley to the monastery, and darkness was falling when we reached our destination.

The situation of Rilo, four thousand feet above the sea, in a narrow part of the gorge where three huge mountains appear to block the way, is superb. The first effect on entering the building is extremely striking; it is indeed difficult to convey an idea of the positive bewilderment experienced at finding this huge imposing structure in so remote and inaccessible a spot. The architecture of the monastery is of the Byzantine order, and the original design may have been to erect a rectangular building inclosing a square courtyard. If so, some unforeseen circumstance effectually interfered with the plan; and the result is an irregular parallelogram surrounding an immense courtyard over one hundred yards in length and proportionately wide. In the centre of this courtyard rise an ancient tower, bearing the date 1335, and a church of modern construction. Various additions have from time to time been made to the original structure, and it would almost appear as if all attempt at harmony had been purposely avoided. Yet far from irritating, this incongruity, on the contrary, adds greatly to the general effect. The monastery proper, or main building, is in most parts three stories high; the outside walls are white, while inside the courtyard the stone is painted black and white to simulate marble; round the courtyard run wide wooden galleries communicating with each other by outside staircases, on to which open the apartments of the monks and those reserved for strangers, whilst the first story is supported by a multitude of arches forming a succession of irregular colonnades.

Our arrival appeared to be unexpected, although the authorities at Sofia had kindly sent word we were coming; but rooms were quickly placed at our disposal by the *higumen* (abbot), a handsome, black-bearded man, carrying the staff of office, but otherwise undistinguished in dress from his monks. This resembled the ordinary garb of the Greek clergy — a long dressing-gown-like garment, and high, brimless head-gear. The accommodation provided for travellers is of a simple description, though it doubtless satisfies Oriental notions of luxurious comfort. Carpets, a large divan well supplied with cushions, and a cupboard, constitute the usual furniture of the guest-chambers; but in one or two rooms are to be found, as a concession to Western prejudice, a table and chair. The walls are white-washed, and the ceiling handsomely carved in the Turkish fashion. The divan serves

as a bed, and the fastidious traveller will do well to forget the fact that its cushions have previously supported the slumbering forms of innumerable pilgrims. Strangers eat their meals in their own apartments, and it is well to bring knives, forks, etc., as the supply of these articles is limited.

As the neighborhood of Rilo enjoys a great reputation for sport, and I happened to have a rifle with me, I determined to go out after chamois the next day, and summoned a *pandour* (hunter) to my assistance. In the glowing words of the Levantine interpreter, innumerable herds of these animals were to be found at a distance of five or six hours from the monastery; but to obtain any really good sport a night on the mountains was declared necessary. To this I made no objection, and accordingly started early the next day, accompanied by the hunter, Dimitri, and two sporting gendarmes. The morning was a lovely one, and the gendarmes manifested their high spirits by discordant shouts and unmelodious snatches of song. I little thought in what a different frame of mind I should shortly see them.

Our path led through a magnificent virgin forest; pines at least one hundred and fifty feet high towered above us, and with immense beech and fir-trees formed a canopy impenetrable to the sun. For about five hours we advanced up the valley, following the course of a torrent until we reached a level where the trees were small and stunted, and open spaces became more frequent. While passing a shelter rudely constructed of branches, an ancient herdsman in the employ of the monastery emerged and entered into conversation with the gendarmes. To judge from the expression of their countenances, his remarks appeared to inspire them with nothing but disgust, and Dimitri, who, on the strength of knowing a few words of German, acted as interpreter, informed me that three men were hiding in the trees on our right hand, and that this was "very bad." Supposing that he was only alluding to our prospects of sport, and as none of my companions expressed a wish to go back, we continued our advance, and crossing the torrent began the ascent of a steep hill on the opposite side of the valley. Meanwhile the heat and the hard walking had begun to tell upon me, and I had fallen somewhat in the rear when I observed the gendarmes dodging about in the scrub with their carbines pointed at some unseen object, while Dimitri, hurry-

ing down to meet me, handed over my rifle. Under the impression that one of the innumerable herds of chamois had been encountered, I was immeasurably disgusted to learn that not chamois, but brigands, were the cause of the delay, and that it was against the latter that I was expected to employ my weapon. Never, I may truthfully say, did I insert the cartridges with so much reluctance; the summons however to defend my life was accompanied by the information that the gendarmes and the brigands were old acquaintances, and that, if I would leave them alone, matters might yet be arranged satisfactorily. I yielded a ready consent, and the two impromptu diplomatists entered upon a parley with the foe. The negotiations continued for about a quarter of an hour — truly a *mauvais quart d'heure*, for all that I could glean from my companion's broken German was that the brigand chief announced himself to be in command of thirty men, and that the three gentlemen (already mentioned) on the opposite side of the valley, might grow tired of a discussion from which they were excluded and take matters into their own hands. Our supply of ammunition was limited, as the gendarmes had left most of the cartridges behind; while I could not help gloomily reflecting that the Turkish frontier was inconveniently close at hand. With a view to the reduction of a possible ransom, I had already composed a pitiful tale to the effect that I was the youngest son of a titheless Welsh parson of the Established Church, or something to that effect, when, greatly to our relief, the plenipotentiaries returned and announced that we were free to depart. The chief, it appeared, had stated in a lofty manner that he was a political brigand and had no grievances against wandering Englishmen; he had even expressed the hope that we would follow our plan of sleeping out on the mountain. In view, however, of the fact that some of the band had stoutly protested against the folly of letting us depart scot-free, and fearing that the chief himself might subsequently alter his mind, the gendarmes had declined the suggestion, and now urged that we should be off as quickly as possible. Accordingly, in the most dignified manner that the circumstances allowed, we retraced our steps, while the magnanimous chief fired a shot in the air as a signal that none of his men were to molest us during the retreat. During our return to Rilo the gendarmes with loud protestations assured me frequently that if they had not

had the privilege of accompanying an Englishman, the whole party by this time would have been feeding the vultures upon the mountain-side. This was indeed a gratifying reflection, and the immortal words of "Pinafore" recurred to me with tenfold force; for, had I yielded to temptation, and become a Russian, a Frenchman, a Turk, Prussian, or even an Italian, what might not have been my fate, and that of the gallant guardians of law and order in Bulgaria? In course of time, and after casting many a furtive glance to the rear, we eventually arrived at the monastery, where the tale of our adventure, though not exciting much surprise, at least afforded its occupants a pleasing subject of conversation.

Several explanations of the apparently inexplicable manner in which these high-souled brigands allowed me to depart in peace were subsequently volunteered to me. According to one theory, the brigands, who were wanted for various murders, were aware that the authorities intended looking them up immediately, and were consequently unwilling to burden themselves with prisoners. Secondly, my diplomatists (*splendide mendaces*) had represented that I was the British consul-general, and that a terrific vengeance would be exacted should anything happen to so august a personage. Thirdly (and this is the reason I should personally prefer to adopt), the brigands may have been struck with the determined appearance of the party, and have hesitated to provoke a desperate conflict in order merely to obtain possession of our arms and loose cash. My own theory is a far simpler one: I attribute our escape to the fact that the men did not know their business and were quite unworthy of the name of brigands.

The following day was devoted to inspecting the monastery, and a visit to the abbot opened the proceedings. The apartments devoted to the use of this dignitary were similar to those occupied by the other monks, but kept in a slightly cleaner condition and ornamented with a greater profusion of colored prints. These works of Russian art, executed in a singularly childish manner, abound all over Bulgaria, and generally represent some triumph of the late war, or a figure of Bulgaria in process of being freed from her chains by a magnanimous Muscovite autocrat. It is to be presumed that they are presents from the Slavonic committees, though there is probably small demand for them at the present time.

After the interchange of the usual civilities, and having tasted the invariable jam and coffee, we started in company with the abbot upon a tour round the monastery. We were first taken to the set of rooms formerly occupied by the luckless Prince Alexander (a frequent visitor to Rilo), which differed in no degree from the ordinary guest-chambers. We next adjourned to the refectory, a bare hall on the ground-floor furnished with a massive long table and rough benches, and from thence to the central kitchen, which is rarely used except on the occasion of a big pilgrimage. This kitchen is of the very simplest description. It is in fact nothing but a gigantic chimney, about thirty feet in diameter at the base and narrowing up to a small opening at the height of about one hundred feet, through which the smoke escapes. Some cooking-pots of Homeric proportions, and ladles containing nearly a gallon apiece, appeared to constitute the whole *batterie de cuisine*. The reverend fathers, it may be remarked, show a painful want of enterprise in the culinary art. During all the time of our visit the fare was invariably the same; hard-boiled eggs, a remarkably thin soup, and stewed mutton. If we asked for anything fresh, the same food was brought in on a different dish, this process appearing to realize satisfactorily the monastic idea of variety. A fair red wine is however provided, and occasionally, as a great favor, trout. From the kitchen we proceeded to the church, an edifice of modern construction, built in the form of a Greek cross and adorned with numerous cupolas. The interior is decorated in a rich, though barbarous fashion, but is not very interesting; some highly venerated relics, including the much-prized hand of a certain St. John of Rilo, were, however, produced for our edification. In striking contrast with the gorgeous decoration of the interior are some rudely drawn frescoes on the outside. These represent the wicked tormented in the most fantastic and horrifying manner, which, it is to be hoped, produces a lasting effect upon the numerous pilgrims. No Bulgarian atrocity that ever inflamed the eloquence of a British politician could compare for one instant with these representations of celestial retribution. A visit to the library concluded the inspection. This is a very small room with a couple of glazed cases containing some works in Russian and French, embroidered vestments, and various religious objects. There are also a certain number

of manuscripts of doubtful quality. The most valuable document in the possession of the monastery is the *chrisovoul* (firman) of Chichman, which constitutes the charter of the foundation. It is written on parchment, in the Bulgarian language, and dated 1379. This firman confirms the privileges granted by former rulers of Bulgaria, and defines the property of the monastery. The signature is to this effect: "The faithful servant of Christ, John Chichman, King and Autocrat of all the Bulgars and Greeks."

The principal sights were now exhausted, and the abbot, accompanied by his brethren, politely made his excuses and withdrew. He reappeared however in the afternoon in order to watch our ineffectual efforts to catch some of the numerous trout in a pool artificially formed in the stream below the monastery. After gazing on our futile attempts for some time with undisguised contempt, he volunteered to give us a lesson in sport, and sent for a doleful-looking lay brother, who waded up to his waist into the icy water with a casting-net. Then the abbot, showing the only symptoms of energy he displayed during the whole of our visit, seized a ponderous stone and hurled it in the direction of the fish; his humble companions followed the example of their chief; the ever-present gendarmes, anxious also to display their skill, pulled out their carbines and fired into the flying shoal; while Dimitri, still smarting under the disappointment of not having had just one shot at the brigands, consoled himself in a similar manner. Meanwhile the lay brother, stimulated by the cries and shots, cast his net right and left, capturing a victim at every throw. Altogether the scene was a lively and amusing one.

But the curious visitor will study with most interest the daily occupations of the monks; though occupation is perhaps a word suggested by courtesy rather than truth. They may not unfairly be described as the living embodiments of the famed *kef* so dear to Orientals; their only apparent duty consists in occasionally attending the services in the church, while the rest of their time is spent in sleep, or in sitting vacantly on the numerous balconies and seats provided for their accommodation within the courtyard. Formerly far more numerous, they now number about sixty only, and are waited upon by a corps of lay brothers and novices. The practice of allowing each man to cook and eat where he pleases instead of obliging all to feed together in the refectory encourages

slovenly habits, while the discipline and method are, to say the least, not such as one is accustomed to associate with the idea of a monastery. Manual labor is almost entirely performed by the lay brothers and paid workmen. The latter live outside the monastery in large buildings which have sprung up from time to time; they cut the wood, work on the farm, bake the bread, grow the vegetables, and in fact supply all the necessities of life required for the religious drones inside. Not a book is to be seen in the place with the exception of those in the library; and they did not seem to be much used, nor was it even clear to me that any one was able to read them.

In the course of a long conversation with the abbot I failed to discover that the monastery fulfilled any useful purpose. It maintains no school, neither does it attempt the humblest technical instruction. In the days of Turkish rule the Russians doubtless utilized it for the purpose of political propaganda, but nowadays the Church exercises next to no influence in Bulgaria, so that even this sphere of activity is denied to the recluses of Rilo. Nor was I much more successful in ascertaining how the establishment was supported; however, I gathered that the monastery owned considerable landed property, mostly forest, and that the monks relied more or less upon what they received from travellers, and upon the alms and offerings of pilgrims. On some of the more important festivals of the Greek Church as many as five thousand pilgrims will come in to remain for some days. My informant maintained that the revenue was scanty and precarious; the government on the other hand asserts that the monastery is very rich, and credits it with an income of about twelve thousand pounds a year. When I asked the abbot if he had no fear of being expropriated some day and sharing the fate of his unfortunate brethren in France, he only smiled in a pitying manner; the prospect of a Bulgarian Jules Ferry had evidently no terrors for him as yet. I am afraid it must be said that these good monks, from their abbot downwards, are almost entirely illiterate; but perhaps one of their most striking characteristics is the absence of all curiosity. Although strangers are exceedingly rare, no one ever expressed the slightest wish to know what was going on either in Bulgaria or elsewhere. Even the unwonted and almost unique apparition of a lady habited in the most fashionable of Western costumes failed to raise the small-

est flutter of interest in their torpid bosoms.

Meanwhile the affair of the brigands which, in the language of diplomacy, we imagined to be closed, was again brought to our notice. On the morning following the bloodless encounter about a score of Bulgarian militia suddenly put in an appearance under the command of our old friend the prefect of Dubnitsa. Rarely have I witnessed any more picturesque spectacle than the halt of these warriors in the courtyard preparatory to beginning their hunt. Each man wore his ordinary variegated costume, and they appeared to be armed with every variety of rifle, from Martinis to weapons, about eight feet in length, of native manufacture. Sandals shod their feet, and they carried nothing but their arms, ammunition, a *capote* or a carpet, and a bag containing bread. Of all ages and sizes, they ranged from the veteran of sixty to the youth of fourteen. It was impossible not to speculate how they were to be distinguished from the brigands themselves, and how the regulars, when they arrived, would separate friends from foes. Around this motley crew stood the no less striking inmates of the monastery, showing indeed but a languid interest in the proceedings. Indeed, the general expression of the faces around me seemed to signify that the whole business was a solemn farce; "What on earth," they appeared to be thinking, "is the use of making all this fuss about a few brigands?" The abbot himself had informed me that in the days of the Turks brigands used constantly to visit the monastery; and he added, "though the authorities are perpetually coming here after them, yet they never catch any one." I must own to have secretly sympathized with these views; the men had treated me in a gentlemanlike, even in a handsome manner, and it seemed quite reasonable to let them alone. However the command had gone forth from Sofia that this particular band was to be pursued, and the sacred cause of law and order vindicated; so after a short rest, the military were formed up under the vast porch: "*Haide!*" shouted the sergeant, and away they started up the valley.

On the morning fixed for the return to Dubnitsa, the preparations for the journey reminded me faintly of the Wilds of West Kensington and the famous coach of "Buffalo Bill." The prefect, who was indisposed, surrendered his steed and occupied one of our carriages; here he sat, a Martini carbine in his lap and cartridges

in his hand, a picture of official responsibility. Fifteen mounted gendarmes, of a singularly ferocious aspect, formed an imposing escort, while every one seemed to have suddenly produced an unsuspected store of arms; even the miserable little interpreter, though probably innocent of firearms had girt himself with an enormous belt of cartridges. The lady and myself were apparently the only persons of the party unprovided with weapons of war. It need hardly perhaps be added that Dubnitzer and eventually Sofia were reached without a sign of the smallest adventure.

Thus ended an interesting and most amusing expedition, which may be warmly recommended to all who are not too sternly bent on travelling luxuriously. And I must in conclusion add, that what has been written of the monks of Rilo has been set down in no unfriendly spirit. On the contrary, I wish these holy men a long and undisturbed existence; not only for their own sakes, but because they constitute a continual, albeit passive protest against the unwearied activity and ruthless self-improvement of the age.

T. W. LEGH.

From The Contemporary Review.
CONTEMPORARY LIFE AND THOUGHT
IN FRANCE.

THE course of the last few months has been marked by a series of events of grave enough import, at any rate in appearance, for it to be worth our while to stop and inquire, not indeed what will be the issue of them (for that rests with the gods), but what their causes have been and what is their true character.

The whole policy of France, external as well as internal, seems to have taken an entirely new direction — or rather, it seems, for the moment, to have lost its way altogether.

With regard to Germany, the long unrest seems to have given place to an almost absolute calm. This tallies with what we have always said of the real disposition of the French, as well as the German people. From General Boulanger and his party downwards, everybody is uttering words of peace, nothing but peace. This outward calm springs partly from the intensity of home anxieties; it springs also from a growing sense of how utterly illusory was the hope of a Russian alliance, and the conviction that France

has so far been used by Russia simply as a trump card for obtaining concessions from Germany. The zeal with which Austria pressed forward her war preparations made a strong impression; so did the anti-French feeling of Italy — a feeling shown not only by the absurd and scandalous conduct of the Florentine police towards our consul in the Hussein affair, but by the incredible and imprudent perversity of the Italians in refusing to renew the ordinary commercial relations with France on the basis of the treaty of 1881. The shifting policy of England with regard to Germany and Italy has been watched with some uneasiness; and it has been realized that if there is no direct hostility to be looked for in that quarter, there is certainly neither support nor good-will to be looked for either. Finally, the death of the emperor William, and the illness of the emperor Frederick III., have, for the time at any rate, appeased or softened even the reasonable grudge that rises in a Frenchman's heart at the thought of Germany. Even the journals which make a point of parading a blind and stupid hostility to everything German, spoke with respect of that majestic, because so serenely simple, death, and of that suffering so heroically endured. We have seen it demonstrated that neither the growth of democratic vulgarity, nor the bitter feeling kept alive ever since the day of defeat by the injuries and annoyances connected with the present *régime* in Alsace-Lorraine, has been able to destroy the native chivalry of the French character. If the Germans wished to see a sincere and eloquent testimony rendered to their old emperor, they had only to look at the French newspapers and magazines; and the eulogy was the more forcible because it was dictated by no spirit of calculation or of subservience, and spoiled by no exaggeration. As to the new emperor, his character and the pathos of his position have evoked an affectionate sympathy almost naïve in its manifestations. One of our poets, M. Coppée, is only surprised (he says so in very eloquent verse) that Frederick III. has not signalized his accession by the restitution of the two provinces, and thus put an end to the odious military system which is draining the life of Europe. The papers have not even had the heart to cry out upon the sham amnesty proclaimed by the emperor, from which are excluded all Alsacians guilty only of the crime of adhesion to the *Ligue des Patriotes*. All the old detestation is reserved for Bis-

marck, in whom the popular imagination sees the incarnation of enmity to France, and for the crown-prince William, whom it regards as a bad son and a future tyrant, bigoted and sanguinary. For the emperor and empress there is nothing but sympathy, compassion, and admiration.

All these things have tended to calm down the public feeling so strongly roused last year by the frontier incidents; and, excepting the traders and manufacturers who are suffering from the tariff war with Italy, nobody cares much just now about foreign affairs, so absorbing is the interest of the duel going on between General Boulanger and Republican Parliamentary government. For this is the new character in which we have now to regard that curious personality which figured a year ago as the embodiment of Radicalism and the war of revenge.

If the Boulanger question has come to be such a grave one, the fault rests certainly with the Republican party. The scandals which sullied the close of M. Grévy's presidency threw a certain discredit on Republican government itself. Public opinion was kept in a state of excitement by the reports of the trial of M. Wilson, on a charge of having got decorations for several persons for a money consideration. Convicted in the first instance, he was acquitted on appeal, because the acts of which he was guilty could not be brought within the scope of any existing law; but the disgrace remained; it tarnished M. Grévy's name as well as his own; and in spite of the severity with which his malversations were visited, and which did credit to the republic, some smirch of the dishonor fell upon the republic itself.

The new president, M. Carnot, ought, on his election, to have retained the Rouvier ministry, and declared it the one aim of his policy to exclude from Parliament all those, whether Royalists, Bonapartists, or anything else, whose object it was to upset the present *régime*; and he should have invited all Republicans to put by their differences till this common end should be attained. The moment was a favorable one for a general election made with this avowed object. No one would have been surprised at a dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies following on a presidential election, so long as the dissolution was made openly in the name of republicanism against monarchy. Unfortunately, M. Carnot had neither the energy of character nor the personal prestige to carry

so bold a policy; and the solution he arrived at was the worst of all possible solutions. He formed a colorless ministry, made up of mediocrities, and headed by M. Tirard, an excellent man enough, but quite incapable of acquiring any ascendancy over the Chamber. The only man of importance in the ministry was M. Flourens; and he was unlucky enough to compromise his exceptional position by a particularly maladroit candidature in the Hautes Alpes. This mistake on the part of the president was followed by far graver mistakes on the part of the Chamber. The Extreme Left and the Radical Left made up their minds from the first that the ministry was still-born, and began a series of manœuvres and lobby intrigues to bring about the formation of a Floquet government. The budget committee, taking no heed of the advanced time of the year, or of its having already been necessary to vote provisional supplies, declined to accept M. Tirard's proposals, and amused itself with framing a fancy budget on an impossible basis. Nothing could exceed the confusion and absurdity of the debate on the budget. After a series of aimless discussions and contradictory votes, after wasting three months in idle talk, they ended by passing a budget very nearly identical with that proposed by M. Rouvier. Hardly was the budget done with, when, on the 30th of March, the Tirard ministry was surprised and thrown out, by a coalition of the Right with the Extreme Left.

M. Tirard fell with his own good-will. He had but just received a vote of confidence; and the majority which overthrew him included only 130 Republican votes, against 230 for him. It was on a motion for making the revision of the Constitution the order of the day. Had M. Tirard chosen to ascend the tribune and say, "This motion is brought forward by men who have not two ideas in common, and cannot agree upon a revision when they have got it, — their only object is to drive out the ministry, and the ministry are not going to be driven out on any such question," the conspirators would have looked sufficiently foolish. As it was, M. Tirard fell into the trap, made it a ministerial question, and then resigned, as he was bound to do — not sorry to retire from a post which had brought him nothing but vexations.

So then M. Carnot was weak enough to send for M. Floquet. There was nothing to designate M. Floquet for the post. The successful majority was composed of 136

Monarchists and 130 Radicals. By what right were the 130 Radicals to govern the Chamber? It was out of all accordance with Parliamentary rules. Besides, M. Floquet did not choose his colleagues from among the victors of the 30th of March. He dispensed with the services of M. Flourens, who had for two years so successfully conducted our foreign affairs, and replaced him by M. Goblet, whose imprudences so nearly ruined us, and who has neither the character nor the acquirements necessary for such a post. At the War Office, where a firm hand is always wanted, and one in which the army has absolute confidence, he put a civilian, M. de Freycinet, who made not a few enemies in 1870, and who is known for his irresolute and uncertain character, ready to truckle to all parties and sacrifice everything to popularity. The ministry of public instruction was given to M. Lockroy, a clever journalist and vaudevilist, who compromised himself in 1871 by his manifestations of sympathy for the Commune, and who managed so badly last year at the ministry of commerce that the directors protested beforehand against the idea of his return. The other offices are filled by not very illustrious personages; the cheerful M. Viette remains at the ministry of agriculture; M. Deluns-Montaud, who might have done very well for education, goes to the public works; M. P. Legrand represents protectionist ideas at the ministry of commerce; M. Ferrouillet, at the ministry of justice, helps M. Deluns-Montaud to represent the moderate Republicans in the Cabinet; M. Krantz is a good minister of marine. The oddest thing of all was the making M. Peytral minister of finance. M. Peytral is a retired chemist, who, as chairman of the budget committee, has shown a remarkable talent for muddling and disorganizing everything. The leader of this heterogeneous Cabinet, M. Floquet, is a good man enough; as president of the Chamber he proved himself wanting neither in sense nor in presence of mind; but he is no statesman. His political fortune was made by one word — by the cry, "Vive la Pologne," which he uttered, incongruously enough, in 1867, in the very ears of the emperor of Russia, on the steps of the Palais de Justice. To wipe out that unlucky recollection, he thought it necessary, at the time of Katkoff's death, to testify an extravagant admiration for the Russian journalist — as if there could be anything but humiliation for an old admirer of the Polish patriots in crying up the most sav-

age of their persecutors. I doubt whether this miserable recantation has done him much service with the Russians. So far as French politics are concerned, M. Floquet is only known as having shared M. Lockroy's sympathies for the Parisian insurgents in 1871; as having, when prefect of the Seine, made himself the champion of municipal autonomy; and finally, as having professed himself, in his various electoral manifestoes, a partisan of the most extreme and impolitic measures. Once only, in a speech made at the Grand Orient, after the election of M. Carnot, he seemed to have come to a better mind, and to understand that the one duty of Republicans at this moment is to unite for the maintenance of tranquillity and economy and the revival of commerce. But, once at the head of the ministry, he soon forgot his prudent declarations, and produced a programme demanding the revision of the Constitution in a democratic sense, the separation of Church and State, the reform of the magistracy, and a complete recasting of the laws relating to taxation and inheritance. It is true that in putting forward this programme he postpones its realization to the Greek Kalends. Revision is to be when a Republican majority votes for it. The separation of Church and State is to take place when a series of laws for the regulation of associations shall have led up to it. In this way he vexes both the opponents and the partisans of these measures — the former by his proposals and the latter by his delays.

Now all this is not serious politics. M. Floquet must not retain as a minister the bad habit, common enough among the deputies, of drawing up in one sounding manifesto a whole scheme of reforms (or of so-called reforms) of which he knows the realization to be quite impossible. M. Floquet knows perfectly well — or, if he does not, he ought to know — that the measures he puts forward as desirable would be most dangerous to the republic. Talk of revising the Constitution! Why, here is a nation whose one aspiration is to be sure of to-morrow, to feel itself living under a *régime* that will last — a nation which is republican mainly because the republic exists, and nothing else does, or seems likely to do; and you tell these people that the republic itself means a series of provisional constitutions, and that everything they did think settled is about to be brought in question. You do more: you threaten the existence of the only two institutions which present any

serious obstacle to a dictatorship — the Senate and the presidency of the republic. As to the separation of Church and State, such a proposal must bring distress and anxiety to all religious minds, and they were already sufficiently alienated from the republic by the decrees against the religious confraternities. It will seem to them like going back to the time of the civil constitution of the clergy — like a persecution of the Catholic religion; and certainly it will give the peasantry the idea that, while the rates will be undiminished, they will have to bear the whole expense of maintaining public worship besides. Such a reform as the separation of Church and State could only be carried by a Conservative government, whose character should be a sufficient guarantee of the spirit in which the change would be made, and which would replace the budget of public worship by an endowment. But what the Radicals wish to see is not a free Church, but a Church crippled by poverty. They mean spoliation. If they get their wish, they themselves will be the first to suffer. As to the reform of the magistracy, such a project threatens the security of a large body of functionaries, already weakened during these last years, as regards both capacity and morality, by the intrusion of political motives into the appointments — a body which it becomes year by year more difficult to recruit. As to the reform of taxation, nobody can suppose that that means anything but an increase of burdens, since we are face to face with a deficit. To increase the duties on succession is not only to tamper with one of the sources of public wealth, but to irritate the whole body of those who have, without giving any satisfaction to those who have not. The duties on succession are already enormous, and public opinion will not stand much more. It is a grievous thing to say, but the Republican system has so disgusted the country by its wasteful finance, by the greediness of its politicians in seizing on places and advantages at the disposal of the State, and by its incessant changes of government, that we grow uneasy at the very name of reform, and see in it nothing but fresh occasion for vain wranglings and new ministerial crises; so sure we are that there does not exist in the Chambers, as they are at present, a clear majority on any one great question. All we ask of the government is to give us a little quiet, a little less uncertainty as to the morrow, and to be more sparing of our money.

Perhaps it may have seemed a dexterous thing for M. Floquet to speak of revision, because M. Boulanger spoke of revision, and the electors applauded him. But he should have taken into account that when M. Boulanger says "revision," what they understand by it is a strong personal government, and an end to Parliamentary Republicanism; and when M. Floquet says "revision," what they understand by it is the continuation or further complication of the chaos we are in at present. The Floquet ministry had one original defect which must make it difficult for it to hold its ground. It had the misfortune to succeed to office just at the moment when the Tirard ministry had been courageous enough to strike at M. Boulanger and to punish his daring violations of military discipline; it had the further misfortune of being brought into existence in consequence of an absurd vote in favor of revision, which it mistook for an indication of the direction it had better give to its own policy; and it had the final misfortune of including members, like M. Lockroy, and even M. Floquet himself, who were bound to M. Boulanger by ties of their own, and are now placed in a very awkward position for conducting the conflict against him. Lastly, it has no chance of maintaining the union between the moderate Republicans and the Radicals, except by confining itself to the business of administration, and abandoning the idea of carrying out any part of the programme it drew up at the time of its installation; and if it does this, it exposes itself to the attack of the Extreme Left. If it moves, it is lost; if it keeps perfectly still, it cannot be said to be safe. It would not be standing now, if the paramount necessity of uniting against the Boulangist movement had not been obvious to every man of sense in the Republican camp.

From the moment when General Boulanger was put under arrest at Clermont-Ferrand, the members of the Republican party pleased themselves with imagining that his popularity was slipping away from him, and that he had ceased to be a public danger. They did not realize that, instead of being taken up with his military duties, he was incessantly employed in correspondence, in journeys to Paris without leave, and in preparing for an illegal electoral campaign, though his duties as a general in full pay rendered him ineligible. Thus, when the elections came on, on the 25th of March, they were amazed to find one Thiébaud, an old Bonapartist journal-

ist, undertaking on his own account to propose General Boulanger as a candidate in four departments at once, and to see this candidature actually secure a majority in the Aisne. It was the sudden irruption of a new political element, upsetting all the old party groups. In defiance of all the caucuses and all the Republican journals banded together against him, the general had carried forty-five thousand votes in the Aisne, and some thirty thousand in the other departments. It was the mass of the electorate, composed of Bonapartists, Clericals, and Radicals, turning instinctively to the man in whom they blindly personified their vague wishes and contradictory aspirations.

The Tirard ministry, better informed than the public, came to the conclusion that General Boulanger, even while he disavowed, with some reservations, those who proposed his candidature, was secretly encouraging them to go on; and they knew that he had come to Paris in spite of the prohibition of the minister of war. They did not hesitate to strike. He was deprived of his command, and arraigned before a court-martial, which found him guilty of grave breaches of discipline; he was first suspended and then pensioned off. From that moment he became the centre of a group of political adventurers, some of whom saw in him an instrument for the destruction of the republic, while others regarded him as a future minister, president, or dictator, who might some day amply repay the support they gave him. M. Boulanger was adroit enough to adopt a programme which relieved him of the responsibility of giving an opinion on anything, and brought people of the most divergent opinions flocking to his standard. It consisted of two words only—dissolution and revision. Discontents and aspirations of every sort and shade could range themselves under such a banner. The most disreputable journals were soon at his command—the *Lanterne*, the *Intransigeant*, the *France*, the *Dix-neuvième Siècle*—journals which represent no serious political opinion, but are given over to scandal, calumny, and extortion. One journal, *La Cocarde*, was especially devoted to his glorification; and the most read of all the popular papers, the *Petit Journal*, which has a circulation of more than a million, was fain, in its own interests, to take a favorable tone. The staff of the Boulangist party, the leaders of the enterprise, were, first a few Bonapartists, M. Thiébaud, M. Millevoje, M. de Loqueyssie; then Count Dillon, the intimate

friend of the general, whose opinions nobody knows, but who left the army under circumstances not greatly to his credit; M. H. Rochefort, a condottiere of the sixteenth century developed into a journalist of the nineteenth, a libertine and a sceptic, a man without a conscience, who turns to politics as a means of procuring some fresh sensation for a jaded brain; M. Laguerre, a clever young barrister, but a mere adventurer, who began by joining the Catholic party, and then flung himself suddenly into the wildest Radicalism, and who has now become the acolyte of the Boulangist party; M. Laur, as ambitious and turbulent as M. Laguerre, but gifted besides with a very funny simplicity; M. Laisant, an ex-Polytechnician, a good mathematician, but half-mad; and finally, a few supers, more or less insignificant or ridiculous, half-fools and half-knaves, MM. Michelin, Le Hérisse, Susini, and Vergoin—conceited self-seekers of low degree, who are Boulangists for the sake of notoriety now, and the chance of a brilliant career hereafter, which is more than they could hope for in the regular order of things. M. Déroulède also offers the assistance of his vain and noisy personality; to him Boulangism means the opportunity of avenging his wounded dignity on the Republicans who despised him. He has succeeded in carrying with him a section of the former *Ligue des Patriotes*, from which he was excluded, and in transforming it into a Boulangist electoral agency. Finally, M. Boulanger has made an important recruit in the person of M. Naguet, the apostle of divorce, a *savant*, and a really cultivated and intelligent man, but a man of unscrupulous character and unsatisfied ambition.

All this, however, goes for very little. General Boulanger might have his newspapers and his agents, his staff of rogues and malcontents, his *mot d'ordre* and his token—the red carnation, the flower of the Bonapartists in 1815; but all this would never make him formidable if he had no army. But he has. I do not say his army is solid and coherent, I do not say it is not liable to disband at any moment, but he has it. Sixty thousand electors voted for him in the Dordogne, on the 7th of April, and he was thus elected for the first time, although he did not then accept. On the 15th of April he was returned for the department of the Nord by one hundred and seventy-two thousand votes, and he now sits in the Chamber as member for that great constituency. Taking one election with another, he has

registered more than three hundred thousand votes.

How comes this army of disinterested privates? By what means has it been enlisted? By what causes has its growth been fed? If the leaders of the party remind us of the friends of Catiline, its followers remind us rather of the crowd that acclaimed Cæsar. What is it that draws them? What have they to hope for?

The personal appearance of the general certainly has something to do with it. His somewhat vulgar beauty is the very thing to please a public which claps the pieces of M. Georges Ohnet. The women of the working-classes, of the bourgeoisie, of the *demi monde*, even to some extent of the *grand monde*, feel an interest in the young general, said to be so brave, who carries his full beard so well, and rides so superbly on such a grand black charger, and who has the reputation, moreover, of being very susceptible to feminine charms. The men were moved by the patriotic speeches, of which he made so many while he was minister; he struck an old patriotic chord that had too long been silent; he gave the soldiers confidence in themselves and their leaders, and made them proud of their flag. Spontaneously, and with one accord, the Radical journals combined to magnify him at the expense of his predecessors in office, and to make much of his "reforms," which consisted really of a few measures of doubtful utility, designed to gratify the soldiers. Furthermore, as General Boulanger happened to be minister at the time of the Schnaebelé incident, and showed himself quite ready to go to war if necessary, he came to be regarded by the bellicose part of the population, especially in the frontier departments, as designated beforehand to be the re-conqueror of the lost provinces. Much of his popularity is thus owing to the illusions of patriotic spirits more ardent than enlightened.

But neither personal charm nor patriotic aspirations alone would have availed to create such a current of feeling in his favor as that which gave him his startling majority in the Nord. Something more was wanting—a widespread discontent with the republican *régime*, and the sudden revival of the Bonapartist spirit, the craving for a dictatorship, or at any rate for a personal government of some sort.

To a certain extent, the disaffection for republican government was not undeserved. The selfish inertia of M. Grévy, his avarice, his indifference to all the

manifestations of national life in arts, letters, and industries, and, above all, the Wilson scandals, in which he could not but be to some extent implicated, did unquestionably cast discredit on the chief magistracy of the republic. The incessant changes of government have created a feeling in the country that it is not being governed at all, and that it is getting into the hands of more and more incompetent men. Many good people are alarmed at the progress of Radicalism, and at seeing M. Félix Pyat returned at Marseilles at the same moment that General Boulanger was elected in the Nord, as if there were no alternative but the dictature or the Commune. The Chamber has lost credit by its taste for noisy discussions leading to nothing, and its distaste for sticking to business, and by its trick of solemnly propounding splendid reforms which never get further than being propounded. Places have been multiplied for the satisfaction of politicians and their friends, and the national budget has been regarded as the lawful prey of the party in power. Petty tyrannies have been organized in the provinces, for the benefit of the deputies, their agents and their friends. Religious people have been wantonly scared and scandalized by a display of crass hostility to the Catholic religion. The administration has been very bad, the deficit has been allowed to go on increasing from year to year, and the Chamber has not even been able, by the 31st of December, to get through a budget which was drafted in May. The Conservatives have been made uneasy by the constant threat of Radical measures, and the Radicals have been disgusted by the constant failure to carry them out.

Yet, numerous and legitimate as are these causes of discontent, they do not suffice to explain the depth of the discontent which is actually felt. The Republicans in Parliament may have managed very badly, but that proves nothing against the republic, nor against Parliamentary institutions. The electors are free to send men to Parliament who will govern better. Besides, if the republic has not done all that was expected of it, it has done a great deal. It has done much for public instruction, for public works, and for the army. The Chambers have not been idle, and they have passed a number of good laws. And certainly the country has enjoyed, during these eighteen years, an amount of liberty it never tasted before. But in the Chamber and outside the Chamber, in the press and in society, the

various parties have been scrimmaging one with another which should do most to discredit the republic by unmeasured and unmerited fault-finding. The Monarchists accused the Chamber of doing abominable things; the Radicals reproached it with doing nothing at all. By force of sheer calumny, a really formidable load of unpopularity has been heaped upon M. Ferry, though the country was indebted to him for valuable colonies, a sound diplomatic position, and a splendid system of education. The government has been held responsible for industrial depression, agricultural depression, bad harvests, long winters, and I know not what besides. Finally, it must be said, the character of the French people is such, that with them everything goes by fashion; they are readily infatuated and as readily disgusted; and, so far, no political system has failed to tire them out within some fifteen or eighteen years. For five years the country is enchanted with the new system, for five years it tolerates it, for five years it endures it with growing disgust, and after that it looks out for another. M. Boulanger has come at the very moment to take advantage of this state of things, and all the malcontents turn blindly towards him in the hope that he is bringing them the looked-for change — the new and unimagined system which will cure their every ill.

The real gravity of the situation lies, first of all, in the unhealthy, epidemic character of the enthusiasm for General Boulanger, which has caught like a fever and been passed from one to another like a St. Vitus's dance; and next, in the fact that a great part of the French nation shows itself indifferent to political liberty, incapable of seeking in itself and in the use of its powers a remedy for the ills from which it suffers, and willing to place itself blindly in the hands of any one who offers himself as a deliverer or a master — in short, ready and eager for servitude. Worse still is the new political morality of which the Boulangist agitation affords the first specimen. For the first time we see politics degraded into a commercial enterprise, and an enterprise of puffs and quackery. To carry on such a campaign as that in the Aisne, the Dordogne, and the Nord, to make it possible for M. Boulanger to lead the luxurious life he does lead, to pay for all this advertising in verse, in prose, in pictures, in articles of every sort and kind, takes money, and not a little of it. What has been spent already must be reckoned by hundreds of thou-

sands of francs. It is said that the secret-service funds of the ministry of war provided the first expenses of the propaganda: but, though our experience of the value of M. Boulanger's word gives but a poor idea of his moral character, it would be difficult to believe that he had simply robbed the chest entrusted to him. But what is certain is, that a syndicate of business men now furnishes the funds for the Boulanger enterprise, exactly as is done in the South American republics for the various presidential parties. Señor Castelar slandered his country when he said, "I know M. Boulanger; he is a Spanish general." He should have said, "He is a Peruvian or a Venezuelan general."

Never was there hatched a more disgraceful political intrigue. With the contrivers of it, it is just a matter of money, and it is by means of the grossest charlatanism that the enthusiasm of the public is kept alive — by absurd engravings, by silly or sentimental songs, and by a sort of incessant puffing, which places M. Boulanger about on a level with M. Géraudel, the chemist of St. Menchould, the inventor of tar lozenges. The very name of Boulanger affords a useful pun: "On ne peut se passer de Boulanger," "C'est à Boulanger que tous devront leur pain;" and so on, till all the scullions and pastry-cooks' and bakers' boys of Paris have formed the general's *clientèle* and become his fervid and bawling partisans. Whatever may be the upshot of this deplorable agitation, its moral effect cannot but be disastrous. It has roused into activity the servile instincts, the base and dastardly craving for a dictatorship; it has developed a taste for trickery and extravagance; it has excited reckless appetites for power and money, and brought all these hungry interests together in the hope that some *coup-de-main* will place the country at their mercy. Those of M. Boulanger's partisans who protest their hatred of the dictatorship and their love for the republic, and who pretend that the Boulangist party is simply a patriotic and national party, independent of all the older groups, know quite well what such protestations are worth; they know that the *plébiscite* they ask for, as a means of raising their hero to power, can only lead to a dictatorship; they know that that hero obstinately refuses to bind himself to any precise opinion on any subject whatever, and flatters alike the Radical and the Bonapartist, M. Laguerre and M. Léandri, the half-bandit Corsican; they know that the party has no programme, except the exaltation

of one single man, one single soldier, one single sword, and that the triumph of that man means the downfall of the republic and the ruin of the national liberties.

Happily, M. Boulanger is a long way off being master yet. It was all very well for some few hundreds of loafers and street-boys to follow in his wake the day that he took his seat in the Chamber; but the population of Paris is thoroughly hostile to him. The students made a formidable manifestation against him; the workmen backed up the students; the Masonic lodges have pronounced against him; while in Parliament, with the exception of some score of scatter-brained desperates, there has been but one voice to denounce him, but one heart to withstand him. That is, of course, among the Republicans. The Conservatives still hope that the troubles he is brewing may be turned to the advantage of their particular candidate for the throne. The Comte de Paris has actually thought it necessary to vindicate his prior claim to the Boulangist programme of revision, dissolution, and the *plébiscite*. But, however it may be as to these rights of authorship, there are, thanks to the Constitution under which we live, a good many obstacles yet between M. Boulanger and the supreme power. M. Carnot is by no means disposed to cede him the presidency. The Senate will not for a long time to come allow itself to be encroached upon. In the Chamber all sincere Republicans are making common cause against him. If only they were capable of uniting in favor of a sensible, moderate, genuinely Liberal policy, free from all chimerical or exclusive tendencies, there would soon be an end to the popularity of M. Boulanger. M. Carnot had only to make a little tour in the south and west, and give a few addresses full of good feeling and reasonable ideas, to produce an unmistakable anti-Boulangist reaction.

To sum up: the Boulangist movement consists of three things — a politico-financial intrigue conducted by rogues, madmen, and self-seekers, too few and too insignificant to be formidable; a popular infatuation, which would die out of itself if it had nothing to feed it; and finally, a growth of dissatisfaction with the present *régime*, which is very formidable indeed, which rests upon very real grounds, and which will assuredly end in the ruin of the republic if republicans themselves do not find some way of appeasing it. There is but one way possible. They must give the country, by their own prudence and

moderation, that sense of security which it now lacks; they must devise retrenchments which will give us a surplus in lieu of a deficit; and they must postpone to some other time those great organic reforms which nobody really wishes for at present. All we ask for is to be at peace to-day, and to be sure of to-morrow.

Is it to all this political agitation that we are to attribute the comparative poverty of literary production? It is impossible to say. But certain it is that, with the single exception of M. A. Theuriot's very pretty little story, "Amour d'Automne" (Lemerre), there has not appeared within the last four months a single novel worth speaking of. Poetry has done better for us. It has given us one work, much debated and very debatable, but of indisputable power and loftiness of aim — "Le Bonheur," by Sully Prudhomme (Lemerre). This is not the first time that Sully Prudhomme, who certainly ranks first among our living poets, has attempted a philosophic poem properly so called — a poem of the type of which the "De Natura Rerum" of Lucretius must ever remain the unapproachable model — the type which André Chénier attempted to naturalize in France in his "Hermès." The thing that gives Sully Prudhomme his superiority over all other French poets of this century is the combination, in him, of profound philosophic thought with the most exquisite poetic sensibility. In this he compares with Goethe and Shelley alone. Even in his slightest lyrics there is this depth of thought. But besides this, it has been his habit from the outset to deal occasionally in longer poems with subjects of a philosophic kind, such as "Art" and "Labor;" and later on, in poems of several hundred verses, he has sought to render philosophical conceptions in lyric or narrative form, as in "Les Destins" and "La Révolte des Fleurs." "Le Zénith" is the finest of these poems; and it is one of the finest poems in the French language. "Les Epreuves" is nothing but a philosophic poem in four cantos; only these cantos, instead of taking a didactic, or dramatic, or lyrical shape, are composed of sonnets. Finally, he has given a whole volume to the question of "Justice." In a sort of dialogue, interspersed with sonnets, lyrical quatrains, and longer pieces in strophes of various rhythm, he eloquently sets forth the cruel contrast between the aspirations of the human heart on the one hand, and the relentless rigor of nature and the interpretations of science on the other.

The new poem on happiness is a poem of the same order, only with this difference, that there are narrative and dramatic elements in it. Two young people, Faustus and Stella, who have loved each other on earth and have never been able to marry, find themselves after death in a higher life, and about to be initiated into perfect knowledge, virtue, and happiness. They find themselves, to begin with, in possession of every delight of which sense is susceptible, in its noblest and most exquisite form; they have the unmixed happiness of satisfied affection; but Faustus is not content, he wants the knowledge of absolute truth; and this he attains by rising to a still higher world. But now there comes to him across the immeasurable space the cry of suffering humanity, and he feels there is no happiness for him so long as suffering exists anywhere, untransfigured by devotion and compassion. He prays for leave to go back to earth and teach the truths he has learned, and Stella accompanies him. But when they reach the earth the race of man has bodily disappeared, and vegetable and animal life have retaken possession of the globe. While Faustus and Stella are considering whether they will not try to found a new humanity, better and purer than the first, the angel of death carries them away into the infinite. They have realized by the absoluteness of their self-sacrifice the absolute perfection of humanity. The poem is often abstruse and difficult, but it contains some of the loveliest passages that Sully Prudhomme has ever written; and the spiritual elevation of it is wonderful. It leaves an unsatisfactory impression on the superficial reader, for he expects to be told the secret of happiness, and he finds instead two people who are always being disappointed in their expectation of happiness. But, in fact, the poem might have been called "The Impossibility of Happiness." What the poet really has to say is this: that to man, with his actual moral constitution, happiness not only is not possible, it is not even conceivable. Absolute truth is not attainable by a finite nature, good does not exist without evil, nor enjoyment without suffering; and self-devotion, the highest of all imaginable joys, pre-supposes effort in the subject, and misery in the object of it. The joys of the blessed are too insipid for the human heart; they allure only by contrast with the woes of earth; man cannot even frame in thought the image of a life other than the life he leads here below. Such is the conclusion

of this noble but profoundly melancholy poem, which finds in the sacrifice of self the only conceivable perfection of the human ideal.

Next to M. Sully Prudhomme's book comes M. Michelet's "Mon Journal" (Mayson). This is the private journal of the great historian at twenty-two or twenty-three years old, when he was a poor little tutor at the Institution Briant, wondering in himself whether he would ever be an author. The genius of the author of the "History of France," and of "L'Oiseau," gleams already in these early pages, and you seem to forecast in them the whole development, intellectual and moral, of the future professor of the Ecole Normale and the Collège de France. His tenderness overflows in that part of the journal which speaks of his friend Poinso, who died of consumption in 1821, and again in the high-toned and emotional passages in which he speaks of women, and of the seriousness there ought to be in love. Many times over you meet with indications of that invincible attraction which drew him towards cemeteries and the thought of the dead — that solicitude to save them from oblivion; a feeling which plays a considerable part in his work as a historian. You cannot but admire the strict discipline to which this young man of twenty subjected himself, with all the young life bubbling up within him — the intellectual discipline by which he regulated his reading, studying mathematics for the sake of the training, forbidding himself all premature production, refusing all journalistic work as injurious to the mind; and the moral discipline, the ceaseless watch he kept over his own thoughts and ways, the putting away of all that could tend to dissipate, the unrelaxing effort to improve himself. It is delightful to see in the young mind, opening wide to all impressions and all acquisitions, the germs of all that he actually realized later on. He meditates a thousand possible books; he hesitates between history, philosophy, and the natural sciences; and you perceive that in a confused way he has in his mind already his works on the bird, the insect, the sea, the mountain — his Vico, and Luther, and the Bible of humanity — his Rome, and France, and the Revolution. He writes in his journal what might be the motto of his whole life: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and what was to be the secret of his style: "Style is an impulsion of the soul."

The Journal of the Goncourts (Char-

pentier,) of which the third and last volume is just out, is the very opposite of all this. With Michelet all is serious, noble, pure; there is no self-consciousness, no literary vanity, nothing but the desire to be useful; the author is nowhere, the man is everywhere. With the Goncourts all is different; you have authors that are nothing but authors, a literary vanity gone raving mad; incessant make-believe in place of earnestness; the most degraded conceptions of life and humanity; every page blotted with cynicism and obscenity. The only natural affection that ever crosses these pages—the love of the two brothers for each other—is tinged with a sort of morbid fatalism; there is no greatness in it, nor any sweet tenderness. While Michelet and Poinsoy are diligently helping to enrich and perfect each other's souls, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt are thinking of nothing but perfecting their style and enriching their collections. They describe themselves with a severity which their enemies would never have ventured on; they are "galley-slaves of literature;" they vary their life of forced labor only by "rushing like madmen through the curiosity-shops." Galley-slaves and madmen! And these are two men with a comfortable independence, artistic tastes, the love of letters, all that could contribute to a happy and ennobling life. Jules dies prematurely from disease of the spinal marrow worn out by this literary epilepsy, this convulsive effort after refinement of style and rarity of epithet. Nothing is more sadly characteristic of the whole generation than this record of the life of two clever writers and penetrating psychologists. In life, they are neither philanthropists, nor citizens, nor friends, nor lovers; they are nothing but stylists; in art, they are not even artists, they are only connoisseurs. Raphael is an absurdity to them; they care for nothing that is not pretty. The whole school of art for art's sake—the Gautiers, the Banvilles, the Baudelaires, the Flauberts, the Paul de Saint Victors, have been more or less infected with the same virus; and their fatal influence is far from being exhausted yet. It was this soulless literariness that prepared the way for the coarse platitudes of naturalism and the morbid or foolish overstraining of the decadence and of the symbolists of to-day.

From these intellectual deformities we turn with all the more delight to such strong and healthy work as proves to us that the great traditions of French literature are not lost, and that the best work,

sound, simple, and luminous, is always sure of public recognition and applause. The Duc de Broglie is one of the writers who have best preserved these strong traditions; and the two volumes on the empress Maria Theresa (C. Lévy), which he has just added to his great work on the military and diplomatic history of France under Louis XV., are at least as interesting as the earlier volumes, if not more so. Taken at first hand from the diplomatic correspondence kept among the archives, this history of the two years 1744-1746 is a model of concise and sparkling narrative. M. Rothan may be mentioned alongside of M. de Broglie as a diplomatic historian; but his special domain is the diplomatic history of the second empire, in which he was not, indeed, one of the most conspicuous actors, but of which he certainly was a most clear-sighted eyewitness. He held a variety of posts in Germany during that period, and noted with wonderful accuracy every advance and every aim of Prussian ambition. If little heed was given to his warnings at the time, it is otherwise with his narrative now. His last book, "Prussia and its King during the Crimean War" (C. Lévy), in which he describes the tergiversations of Prussia—placed as she was between Russia, with whom she had family ties; Austria, on whom she would have been glad to avenge the humiliation of Olmütz; and the western powers, whose alliance might have secured for her some immediate advantages, and towards whom the then crown-prince, the future emperor William, had leanings—forms a very interesting preface to the events of 1863, 1866, 1867, and 1870; and it throws a light even on existing political complications between the three empires, Russia, Austria, and Germany. It is contemporary politics again, though viewed from the other end of the telescope, which form the subject of M. H. Pessard's two amusing volumes "*Mes Petits Papiers*." The first volume describes the struggle carried on by the opposition in Parliament under the empire; the second describes political life at Versailles from 1871 to 1873, during the presidency of M. Thiers. It is a very animated, very humorous, and at the same time very impartial account; and while he does not spare the weaker side of M. Thiers's character, M. Pessard brings out all the more clearly the surpassing powers and the real greatness of the statesman, who, in the midst of parties irreconcilable to each other and all alike distrustful of him, pursued his purely patriotic task

of liberation and retrieval, unmoved by clamor or by calumny. Monarchists and Radicals have united in decrying M. Thiers, and in making him out to have been mean and self-seeking; but history, which sees straight and clear, will yet do him justice; and M. Pessard, with all his mischievousness and his sharp sayings, will certainly contribute to give the services which M. Thiers has rendered to his country their true place in the eyes of posterity.

There are two works which I can at present only mention without discussing them, both of which will produce a sensation, though on very different grounds. General Boulanger, feeling, no doubt, that he has not yet been sufficiently advertised, is ambitious of the honor of authorship. He is publishing a history of the Franco-German war, which has brought him, it is said, two hundred thousand francs, and of which an edition of two millions is being printed. We have as yet seen only the first number, containing a preface which is a noble specimen of folly and bad French. Not that this is any reason why it should not be bought and read. Human stupidity is immeasurable; the universal electorate is its finest manifestation, and Boulangerism is one of its most remarkable products. This is what makes it so difficult to make head against it, for neither common sense, nor ridicule, nor honesty, is anything at all to the purpose.

"L'Immortel," the novel which M. Daudet has just begun in *L'Illustration*, will raise a somewhat more interesting controversy. It is the portrait of an Academician — a member of that French Academy which has just shown itself so far from eager to welcome M. Daudet into its ranks, and of which M. Daudet would now no longer deign to form a part. The perennial squabbles as to the utility of the Academy, and the curiously unliterary motives which determine its elections and exclusions, will now get quite a fresh start. It must be admitted that the Academy does its best to justify the criticism it excites. It had, not long ago, three seats to fill, and three men of high standing, authors of conspicuous ability, were candidates for them — M. J. J. Weiss, M. de Vogué, and M. Rothan. The Academy chose M. d'Haussonville, because he is the nephew of the Duc de Broglie; M. Claretie, because he is the manager of the *Comédie Française*; and M. Jurién de la Gravière, because he has been an admiral. No doubt M. d'Haussonville has published very useful and agreeable books; he is

quite an authority in questions of poor-relief and penitentiaries, but he is not a writer to be compared with M. Weiss. M. Claretie has an amazing literary fecundity; he has tried fiction, the drama, history, and journalism, with equal facility; and he is the most amiable of men; but he has not yet produced one work which has made any mark or which will live. What is he to be weighed against M. de Vogué, one of the most brilliant and original writers that have appeared within the last ten years? Admiral Jurién de la Gravière has published a mass of highly interesting information, not only on his own campaigns, but on the history of naval affairs from Salamis to Navarino; but he never pretended to be classed, even in the most modest rank, with the genuine men of letters. The worst of all is that, amongst the Academicians themselves, some of those who show the greatest hostility to downright literary genius, and who are most eager to throw wide the door to mediocre writers recommended chiefly by their social position, are precisely those who have owed their own election to mere literary merit — as if they preferred to have beside them neither superiors nor rivals. They do not observe that, with the lowering of the literary standard of the Academy, their own value must go down; and that there is something obviously absurd in seeing such writers of French prose as Daudet and Fustel de Coulanges left outside a body which professes to represent the national literature, or in seeing a mediocrity like M. Hervé preferred to a master like M. Weiss. Death does indeed make gaps in the Academy which it is sometimes difficult to fill. To replace Labiche, the brightest and lightest of contemporary playwrights, who threw into his most ludicrous farces a truth and depth of insight worthy of Molière, and whose works will one day be valued as an authentic record of the French bourgeoisie of the nineteenth century, the Academy was fortunate enough to find M. Meilhac, who there rejoined his old fellow-laborer, M. Halévy. M. Halévy has perhaps the finer and more polished style of the two; but M. Meilhac has gifts of invention, of fancy, and even of poetry, which are wanting to M. Halévy. One may, I think, without injustice, impute to M. Meilhac the better part of "Frou-frou," one of the triumphs of the modern theatre, whether for its drollery, its pathos, or its rendering of character. He has just brought out at the Variétés a piece called "Décoré," in which, under

the pretext of a ridiculous intrigue, he has given us a clever picture of manners which leaves far behind it M. Halévy's charming pastoral, "L'Abbé Constantin," given not long ago at the Gymnase. But if a worthy successor could be found for M. Labiche, who is to replace M. Nisard? M. Nisard was best known to the outside public by the abuse hurled at him under the empire by all the opposition writers, on account of his kindness for the imperial régime, and by all the men of the romantic school, on account of his adherence to classical doctrine; but whatever may have been his weaknesses as a courtier, or the narrowness of his literary theories, he was nevertheless one of the most remarkable writers of our day. His studies on the Latin poets of the decadence, in which he points a criticism of Persius, Lucian, or Juvenal straight at the heads of the romantic school, are at once a powerful controversial pamphlet and a fine piece of literary history. His historical studies on the Renaissance, the Revolution, and the empire, abound in suggestive and interesting views, stamped with the mark of a most judicious mind, and often admirable in the form of their expression. His true monument, the history of French literature, in spite of its unsatisfactoriness in all that concerns the early sources; and the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, contains some of the finest pages ever written on the authors of the seventeenth century. If the Academy wished to replace one great critic by another, it might choose between M. Bourget, who has far deeper psychological insight than M. Nisard; M. Brunetière, who has wider and more solid attainments; and M. Lemaître, who has more gaiety and wit. But none of these, of course, will present himself as yet. Let us hope, then, that the Academy will have the good feeling to elect M. de Vogué, who puts into his studies, literary, historic, or artistic, an eloquence, a loftiness of thought, and now and then a flight of poetry, unknown to the sober, cold, and reserved genius of M. Nisard.

M. de Vogué has done more than anybody else to introduce the Russian literature into France; and, considering the ardor with which these books are still sought and read, it seems only just to do public honor to the man to whom we owe so much and such rare enjoyment. The passion for these Russian books amounts to infatuation; inasmuch that not only was Tolstoi's gloomy, wild, and turgid drama, "The Power of Darkness," re-

ceived with enthusiasm by a select public at the Théâtre Libre of M. Antoine, but it draws the masses at a little suburban theatre, the Bouffes du Nord. The popularity of this play of Tolstoi's doubtless helped to prepare the public for another piece, given at the Théâtre Libre, "Le Pain du Péché," written by a Provençal poet, Aubanel, and turned into French verse by M. Paul Arène. This too is an exotic, like "The Power of Darkness," but it is an exotic of another kind, from the south instead of the north. It yields nothing to Tolstoi's drama in point of savageness, but its savageness is less human and more factitious, and it leaves a less noble impression. The husband who, after surprising his wife with her lover, makes his children eat the repast prepared for the adulterous couple, in the superstitious hope that this "bread of sin" will kill the children of the sin, seems to us less like an avenger of the honor of his house than a pompous madman. This sort of thing is not Shakespeare, nor Æschylus, nor even Tolstoi; it is Lope de Vega. The Spanish drama has always had this taint of rhodomontade.

Nevertheless, we may see in the success of Tolstoi, and even of Aubanel, the inclination of the public for a stage more simple as to externals, more truthful and more poetic at once than that of the romanticists, the classicists, or the naturalists. M. Zola's coarse melodrama, "Germinal," fell without even a storm of indignation; and M. Ohnet's trite production, "La Grande Marnière," was received by the critics with scornful indulgence. It is a great pity that the absurd timidity of the Théâtre Français should have led it to postpone the representation of M. J. Aicard's "Le Père Le Bonnard," which is exactly conceived as a simple, strong, and human plot, presented in verse at once very colloquial and very poetic.

Spring is not only the season when the sun, Nature's great court-painter, lays on the color of his trees and meadows, it is also the time when all the little biped painters, his feeble imitators, come forward with their little sketches and studies, more or less faithful, from his great work. Tiring as it is to toil through so many kilomètres of canvas, it would be very unfair to ignore how much there is that is interesting in the tendencies of contemporary art. Two very distinct aims are clearly to be recognized in it, very different but by no means contradictory—in execution, the effort after truth of tone and light; in

conception, the quest of poetry and idea. The often extravagant attempts of the open-air school have not been without their fruits. As you enter the Salon this year there strikes upon you from some of the canvases a really exhilarating sensation of freshness and light. From this point of view M. Rolle's "La Fermière" is quite an enchantment, it is all so luminous, delicate, and caressing. Even those painters who describe themselves as "vibrists," and who, instead of blending their colors, lay them alongside each other in blots or stripes, have got an effect of relief and luminous reality which is altogether surprising. This is the case with M. Eliot in his "Burial of a Young Girl in the Country." It is also the case with M. Kuehl, a German painter, whose "Organist" is one of the gems of the Salon; and with M. Kuehl the method is more harmonious and less mannered. These modern painters of ours are learning to set the air in circulation round their figures, with a perfection the elder painters never knew. But more interesting even than these advances in the mechanism of art, is the effort towards high art, and towards the expression on canvas of really great ideas or deep feeling. The numerous decorative paintings lately ordered for public monuments, *mairies*, Paris Town Hall, Sorbonne, schools and Pantheon, have had the happiest influence. If there are vexatious failures, like the "Virgil" of M. Duez, and unsatisfactory performances like M. Benjamin Constant's great triptych, "Les Lettres et les Sciences," or those of M. Comone and of M. Bubufe, there are also some very successful efforts, such as M. Flameng's great decorations illustrating the history of the Sorbonne; M. Collin's charming composition, "L'Eté;" and M. Humbert's severe and strong painting, "La Maternité." M. Maignan's big canvas, "Le Voix du Tocsin," representing a bell flung out at full swing, and darting out from it, furious, dishevelled, terrified, and terrible, allegorical figures representing war, fire, pestilence, and all the plagues, is bold exceedingly; and, unsatisfactory as it may be both to eye and mind, it leaves on both, at any rate, a profound impression. The two pictures that touched me most are those of M. Tattetgrain and M. Detaille. The first represents a seashore at low tide, covered with the *débris* of a wreck. A custom-house officer, beaten by the wind and drizzling rain, stands looking on, a solitary figure. This scene of desolation — the furious sea, the storm-clouds flying across the sky

in the last gleam of evening, all given simply, truthfully, with an eloquence without emphasis — takes possession of you, and sinks into your very heart. M. Detaille's picture is of more ambitious range. It is named "The Dream." A number of soldiers in modern uniform — their tunics and capotes as yet unstained by war — lie sleeping in a field in the beautiful autumn night after the peaceful manœuvres of the day. Their guns, which never yet shot ball except at the target, are stacked hard by, and the flag of the regiment rests over them, untorn in its canvas sheath. The young soldiers are dreaming, and in the sky above them there sweep by in a whirlwind, with ragged but victorious standards, the armies of the great wars — of Rocroy, of Fontenoy, of Arcole, of Austerlitz, and of Magenta. It is a fine inspiration, and it is rendered with that faultless mastery to which M. Detaille has long accustomed us. If the jury were to take this opportunity of awarding the medal to our foremost military painter, the public would be unanimous in applauding their choice.

This year, as in several years past, we cannot but notice the high place taken by the foreigners in our exhibitions. Spain lends us in Señor Baixeras a singularly vigorous figure-painter; and Italy sends a landscapist of the first rank in Signor Tanzi. I have spoken of one German, Herr Kuehl. M. Edelfelt has for years been chief among the Scandinavian painters. England makes her mark this year with the exhibits of Messrs. Orchardson, Knight, Hitchcock, and Herkomer, and Miss Duncan.

The smaller exhibitions earlier in the year were well worthy of attention. M. Willette, one of the most original designers of the day, has been exhibiting the whole of his works in pen and ink, charcoal, crayon, and water-color, in a room in the Rue de Provence. M. Willette is one of the most curious products of Parisian life and of the literature of the decadence and symbolism, which has had its influence also on other painters, such as M. Besnard. His work shows a refinement of sensuality, a fantastic mysticism, an unbridled invention; the gruesome images of the charnel-house side by side with the most unreserved Parisian licentiousness. He has the finest possible sense of the picturesque, and the gift of rendering individual character by line and attitude and gesture. He unites in himself the poet and the sensualist, the wit and the thinker, the touch of genius and the touch of folly.

He is a Boulangist, an anti-Semitic, a *décadent*, and a loungeur. I suppose he will end either at Charenton or at La Trappe.

The water-color exhibition contained nothing very striking. Français, Zuber, and Harpignies were unrivalled, as always. The pastellists, on the other hand, had real revelations for us. M. Besnard sent figures of exquisite modelling and wonderful poetry, and some powerful portraits. M. Gervex's portraits were very fine; so were M. Hanche's; M. Duez sent some sea-pieces which prove him a better pastellist than painter; M. Montenard, and particularly M. Lhermitte, some lovely landscapes. Some of the pastellists, M. E. Lévy and M. Machard, make the mistake of aiming at oil effects in pastel; but those who, like M. Besnard, preserve the lightness and softness of the pastel while getting from it richer tones than the masters of last century ever attempted, have secured really exquisite effects, quite different from those of oil or water-color.

While the exhibition of furniture and other objects of the last two or three centuries is going on at the Hôtel de Chimay another exhibition has been opened of a very special kind — the exhibition of French caricature. To enjoy it thoroughly you must begin by reading M. Grand-Carteret's big new book on the history of caricature in France — that is to say, the history of manners and opinions read by the light of caricature. As a matter of fact, while caricature in the hands of a master like Gavarni or Daumier is a province, or at least a district, of the kingdom of art, it is always — even in the hands of the coarser caricaturists, like those of the Revolution or the Restoration — a precious document for the light it throws on the politics, manners, and fashions of the time. Under the Revolution it was mostly political, and it was the same under Louis Philippe. Under the first empire the fashions were its butt; under the second, women and the *demi monde* fill only too significant a place in it. M. Grand-Carteret has followed with learned care, and with the instinct of an historian and an artist, all the vicissitudes of this art; and he has drawn up an invaluable list of all the French caricaturists and all the collections of French caricatures.

Finally — since in Paris Russia must now have a part in everything — we must not omit to say a word about the exhibition of the works of M. Vereschagin in

the Cercle of the Rue Volney. As paintings they are but mediocre; they are brutal in color and loose in drawing. As records of the countries he visited — Syria and India — they are very interesting. And they are interesting from the tendencies they display. M. Vereschagin has been a soldier, and deeds of extraordinary heroism are recorded of him; but he has a horror of war, and of cruelty in any shape whatever. The picture of a convoy of Turkish prisoners caught in a snowstorm during the war of 1877, and the three great canvases which represent the Crucifixion, the execution of the Sepoys in India, and a hanging in Russia, are an eloquent and powerful demonstration against war and capital punishment.

G. MONOD.

From St. James's Gazette.

THE HOHENZOLLERNS.

SOME of our contemporary historians of the improved modern pattern are rather inclined to sniff at the study of royal biography and genealogy. They request us to look at the people, in their sufferings and triumphs, and not to pay overmuch attention to a few families; in fact, they hint that to do otherwise is no more than a species of learned flunkeyism or antiquarian tuft-hunting, very much unworthy of an enlightened person of letters in a democratic age. There is, however, a considerable weight of authority against these reformers. The greatest historians — from Tacitus to Ranke — have nearly always dwelt with minute and artistic care on the personal characteristics of reigning families and dynasties. Macaulay, who was much too good an English Whig to have any prejudice in favor of royalty, is at his best in his portraits of kings and princes. Carlyle, whom no one will accuse of any form of tuft-hunting or flunkeyism, displays an inexhaustible curiosity on the whole subject. To him and to many others the Prussian royal house has always been one of the most interesting phenomena in history; nor has the interest been diminished by the events of the past few years, and even the past few months. There is no denying that the Hohenzollerns are a very remarkable line. No other — unless it be that of the earlier Ottoman sultans — shows such a fairly unbroken succession of able rulers. During the last two hundred and fifty years

there have been nine sovereigns of Brandenburg or Prussia. They have not been all what are called "great" men; in fact, perhaps not more than two deserve that appellation. But there was only one of the whole number who can be said to have been really a weakling. The rest had some, at least, of the most valuable qualities of kingship. The Great Elector, Frederick the Great, William I., and the emperor who has just passed away—these were all sovereigns of much more than common ability and character. But even those who filled in the gaps were, as a rule, worthy to hand on the torch. Frederick I. was something more than a merely "expensive Herr." He could fight and diplomatize to very good purpose when required. Old Frederick William, the father of the great Frederick, was a coarse and brutal savage. But the rufianly old hero of the memoirs of Wilhelmina, and of "Zopf und Schwert," was a very useful king of Prussia. "With a wise instinct," says his biographer, "Frederick William had discerned that all things in Prussia must point towards his army; that his army was the heart and pith, the State being the tree, every branch and leaf bound, after its sort, to be nutritious and productive for the army's behoof." With the true Hohenzollern directness of aim and singleness of purpose, he found out his work—the one work that was likely to be most advantageous to his family and his country—and did it to the end. There was a good deal of that same spirit in Frederick William III., the great grandfather of the present emperor. His lines were cast in difficult places, and some of the severest reverses any nation sustained came in his time. But the king whose armies were defeated at Jena and Auerstadt was within a few years one of the conquerors at Leipzig; and the silent steadiness with which Frederick William III. pursued the work of national regeneration is as remarkable as the quiet energy with which William I. transformed the victims of Olmütz into the victors of Sadowa and Sedan.

The Hohenzollerns occupy an almost unique position in history as the creators not merely of a kingdom or of an empire, but of a nation. The very existence of Prussia is the work of this tenacious race. Firm and compact as the country seems, penetrated as it is through and through with the most intense national feeling, it is one of the most artificial States that ever figured on the maps of the world.

Austria itself is not more so; but then Austria is not, and to all appearance never will be, a nation, but only a collection of nationalities. Yet the material out of which Austria was made is rich and promising compared with that from which the Hohenzollerns, by seven hundred years of strenuous toil, hammered out the kingdom of Prussia. Consider what it was down to the reigns of the last few kings—a great boneless stretch of territory, straggling half across Europe, with no natural boundaries anywhere except on the sea, and no proper frontiers, no geographical or ethnological unity; a large part of it mere sandy waste or barren marsh, touching on powerful military States on all sides, cut into here and there by Denmark, Sweden, Hanover, Saxony; its people a conglomerate of High Germans, Low Germans, Poles, and Wends. From the days of the first burgraves of Nuremberg, all through the Middle Ages, the Reformation, and the subsequent centuries, the Hohenzollerns have been piecing this anomalous dominion together—marrying scientifically, annexing bit by bit, fighting, diplomatizing, and the son beginning where the father left off—and always, it would seem, with a clear prevision of the end which has at length been attained in our own time. There is no such example in history of a purpose pursued so resolutely and so long. "A thrifty, steadfast, diligent, clear sighted, stout-hearted line of men; of loyal nature withal, and even to be called just and pious, sometimes to a notable degree. Men not given to fighting, where it could be avoided; yet with a good swift stroke in them, where it could not; princely people after their sort, with a high, not an ostentatious, turn of mind." A lucky people too, it may be added; but their qualities are of the kind to gain fortune. From the first Frederick margrave of Brandenburg to the latest William of Germany, they were men who knew their own minds and had learned the two great secrets of how to act and how to wait.

With all this it may be said that these Brandenburg princes have had a good deal of the commonplace in them. They have not been romantic or poetical figures. They had none of the Stewart charm or the Bourbon magnificence. Only one of the number, Frederick II., fills a large space in history by virtue of his own personal talents. Of the rest of them (excepting the few failures) it might be said, as Emerson said of Bonaparte, that they

show how much may be done by the sedulous practice of certain recognized virtues of every-day life. They are sometimes represented as mainly a race of soldiers. But we may doubt if their real eminence lies so much in the arts of war as in certain of the arts of peace. They have been as a rule (for here too there are exceptions) supremely good managers. They have shown in carrying on the business of their dominions the same qualities which enable men to do well in the conduct of their own affairs — thrift, frugality, cautious judgment, and promptitude in action. Their success in soldiering, great as it has been, has been often owing not so much to superior strategical tactical genius as to careful preparation beforehand, prudent economy of resources, and quickness in seizing opportunities. The Great Elector drove the Swedes out of Pomerania by a couple of brisk and fortunate military dodges. Frederick the Great's successes in his first Silesian campaign were certainly not due to good generalship, for his strategy was conspicuously defective. He was successful because his father had been preparing for him an army which was the best in Europe, and because he had the audacity to strike at exactly the right moment. But, whether they have been great captains or not, the Hohenzollerns have generally known how to husband their forces, how to be as cautious and deliberate in preparing as they are rapid in acting, and how to find the right man — a Dörfling, a Scharnhorst, a Blücher, a Roon, or a Moltke — to do their work for them; and those who can do that are generally successful in warlike and other matters. It has been the great function of this family to carry to its highest perfection one conception of kingship. The Hohenzollern king is not the ornamental appendage to the governmental machine, not the splendid and stately representative of all that is best in the national character; on the contrary, many of these sovereigns, and some of the most successful of them, have been strangely blind to much that is worthiest in their nation. The great intellectual movement of modern Germany has swept by almost unnoticed by them. The one member of the family who had a real enthusiasm for letters was Frederick the Great, and he cared chiefly for the literature of a foreign people. The one cultivated artist and patron of art was Frederick William IV., almost the least successful in his government of the whole line. As a rule, the Hohenzollerns have been men of some-

what narrow sympathies and little depth of culture. For liberty they have cared, for the most part, next to nothing; perhaps the truest Liberal of the dynasty was, if we except the deceased Kaiser, again the unfortunate Frederick William IV. Their business has been different, or so at least they have conceived it, in the past. It has been their function to develop and cherish the ideal of a king who is at once the steward and high administrator of the State, and, as Goethe said, the polar star round which the whole national order revolves.

From St. James's Gazette.

THE LATE EMPEROR'S MALADY.

THE emperor Frederick is laid in the tomb, and all but a few have begun to turn from the grief that oppresses them so heavily. It is evident from all accounts that the emperor's death has had a profound effect upon the minds of the people, and that it has produced more of real sorrow even than was at first apparent. But what may be called domestic sympathy is strong amongst all peoples of the Teutonic stock; in none is it so strong as amongst the Germans; and no more touching scenes than those which marked the last days, the last hours, of the emperor Frederick can well be imagined. Assuredly they will not be forgotten soon. But it is not for us to dwell upon them. Silence best becomes the spectators of sufferings and sorrows like those that were witnessed at Friedrichskron of late, and we do not suppose now that much more will be heard of the contentions about the emperor's malady. It was as well that its true character should have been settled, for the reason that, since it is ascertained, there will be a speedier end to all the heartburnings occasioned by differences as to that matter.

The fact is that, according to a very prevalent and very angry opinion, Sir Morell Mackenzie was called in to frustrate the law by which no member of the royal and imperial house can succeed to the throne if he is smitten with a fatal disease. There is obvious good sense in this rule; for it is easy to see that without it a nation like the German, a nation so governed and placed in circumstances like those that environ Germany, might be exposed to confusions and uncertainties of a dangerous kind. In the present case there was a very distinct fear that such

confusions might ensue—not so much, perhaps, in regard to the foreign relations of Germany as to the internal affairs of an empire which if it is very strong is also very new, and exposed in no slight measure to whatever dangers may be anticipated from the more volcanic forces of Socialism. A short reign, a reign of a few months, is always harmful in some measure. In this case a strong apprehension existed that the inevitable confusions of such a reign would be heightened by actual conflict and contradiction in affairs of State, out of which very little good of any sort could come, while very great mischief might be expected. As to those apprehensions there can be no doubt at all. They existed in such force as to produce dissensions of most serious character—dissensions in which the highest personages in the realm were involved, no doubt to their own deep distress. Thus it was that the quarrel of the doctors had a far deeper significance than such disputes can possibly take under ordinary circumstances. It was at first determined by the emperor's family, or by the empress Victoria, that there should be no post-mortem examination. But the announcement of that determination was received with a great deal of popular discontent. Moreover, it appears that some such examination is prescribed by the laws that govern the affairs of the Hohenzollern family; it seems probable that Prince Bismarck himself desired that it should be made; and made it was, with the result that Sir Morell Mackenzie has reported that cancer was the malady which caused the emperor's death. Thus the opinion of the German doctors has been justified, though none of Sir Morell Mackenzie's expressed opinions have been falsified; because he never said more than that the presence of cancer had not been ascertained. But of course there was always a doubt; while as to the question whether the operation recommended by the German doctors should or should not have been carried out, that was one which manifestly lay with the sufferer himself to determine; and it is enough to say that for reasons which can be well understood, he resolved not to risk the operation, but to take his chance of overcoming the malady. Perhaps we may mention one fact which must have had some effect on the patient's mind; up to this time the number of known cases in which the aforesaid operation has proved successful is only one in two. In other words, the operation has proved immediately fatal in every second case.

From The Saturday Review.

MARTENS, EAGLES, AND OWLS.

FOR the tourist the sight of one of the Alpine birds or beasts of prey almost always adds to the charm of the scene. If he can catch a glimpse of a marten, one of the most graceful as well as beautiful of the wild quadrupeds of Europe, as it courses beneath a bank or darts to its retreat, he feels that his walk has not been taken in vain. The familiar fox is greeted with something like the feelings with which we welcome an old friend to a new home, and even the smaller robbers all seem to be in their right place in the breezy sunny landscape. But the birds are an even greater and more constant delight. One of the larger hawks circling overhead, or, if one has had a hard climb, beneath one's feet, seems the rightful proprietor of the fir woods among which one stands or which one has left behind. Still more, when one is standing in the recesses of the rocks at the head of a mountain torrent, with nothing but precipitous grey cliffs around, and a huge raven comes hovering past or an eagle hangs apparently motionless on outspread wings in the middle of the sky, do we realize our perfect solitude, and feel that the peaks and precipices belong to them rather than mankind; and if, on our return, we hear a forester boasting of his success in slaughtering these lords of the wilderness, we are apt to feel something like indignation as well as regret.

To a forester, who looks upon the game of the district almost as his own flocks and herds, it is natural that the matter should seem different. During the whole winter he has fed the roes at a considerable expense, he has perhaps postponed the felling of a part of the wood because he knows that it contains the nest of a black cock or an auerhahn, and he is by no means inclined to look quietly on while the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air fatten on the harvest of his exertions. The marten is a gourmand. In the early spring he lives chiefly upon eggs, later on he preys upon leverets, unfledged birds, and weak young creatures of every kind. He is far too dainty to touch the flesh of his victim at this season; he simply drinks the blood while it is still warm and goes his way. He has no objection to treat a domestic fowl in a similar manner if he can get into a hen-house and does not find enough fresh eggs to gorge his voracious appetite. In winter he attacks even larger game. Nothing is more helpless than a roe after a heavy snowfall; at

every step his hoofs break the thin crust of ice, and so he has to wade through the solid mass. Hour by hour the marten glides over the surface of the snow beside or close behind him, till the hunted creature is fairly exhausted; then its pursuer springs upon its neck, bites the jugular vein, and sucks out its very life. In winter foxes hunt in a similar way, but they break the spinal cord and eat at least a part of the flesh instead of drinking the blood of their victims. If times are hard, they bury the rest of the carcass, but they greatly prefer fresh meat.

For the birds of prey it may at least be urged that they do act as natural scavengers. This year in many parts of the Austrian Alps the avalanches broke new paths for themselves, carrying down a large quantity of well-grown forest trees, and overwhelming whole herds of chamois and deer. When the masses of snow began to melt in the more lonely valleys ravens and birds of similar tastes might almost always be seen hovering above them. They were waiting for the dead bodies to come to light in order that they might devour them. But nature does not always supply so harmless, though repulsive, a meal; and when it is wanting poaching begins. It is especially during the breeding season that their depredations are serious, for then their families have to be provided for, and there are many helpless young animals about. Thus the remains of eight young roes, twelve chamois kids, and several lambs, were found beside an eyrie which contained two unfledged eagles in Carinthia, 1887.

The destruction of these wild birds and beasts is, therefore, one of the chief duties of a forester if a carefully preserved estate is committed to his care. Both poison and traps are well known, but the elder generation regard them, particularly the former, with dislike. They seem to think that they are taking an unfair advantage of a brother sportsman by employing such underhand means of getting rid of him. The old methods are, therefore, still in full use, and they are by no means unsuccessful.

To shoot a fox seems unchivalrous, to say the least, but in a country where hunting is impossible it is perhaps the most polite way of putting an end to its existence. This is done in the following way: a room is prepared in some old mill or outhouse that lies outside the village, and can be heated at least by an iron stove. At a convenient distance — say from thirty to sixty yards, according to the nature of

the ground — carrion is from the earliest winter thrown out upon the snow. This attracts the foxes, and a watchman informs the master of the room at what hour of the night they usually appear. When the moon is near the full, he seats himself in his ambuscade about an hour before the appointed time. There must be no light, and conversation can only be carried on in a whisper. When the fox appears he seems to untrained eyes little more than a shadow on the snow, but this half sight of him is usually enough for his enemy. Should he be missed, he will not return to the same place till new snow has fallen.

The larger birds of prey are often shot in a similar manner, though when they are concerned more labor and discomfort are involved. Some small hut which lies high among the rocks and is used in summer by the herdsmen or the fellers of timber is hired, and dead animals are exposed at a convenient distance. Any one who comes down the mountain-side is usually ready to let the sportsman know if the carcasses have been touched, and, if such chance news should fail, he can easily satisfy himself by visiting the place. When he is convinced that the expected guests have duly put in their appearance, he leaves his home at such a time as will allow him to reach the hut an hour before dawn. Such a night excursion over the frozen snow requires considerable local knowledge and some skill in mountaineering, and when the destination is reached it is by no means a palace of delight. The huts can rarely be heated in any way, and, if they could, it would be of little use as the sportsman must sit with his window open. A raven or an eagle will be frightened away by the mere opening of a case-ment to which, if it be done quietly, the fox pays no attention. All is now perfectly still around, and the stars are the only lights that are to be seen. At last a grey streak appears in the east, and soon afterwards a dark mass hovers or pounces down on the feast that has been treacherously spread for him. The light is still too dim to admit of a certain aim; but, if the sportsman is young and keen, he will probably try his luck. Should the bird fall he lets it lie quietly, in order not to awaken the suspicion of new-comers. In this way three or four large birds may occasionally be bagged in a single morning. In the evening twilight a shot may occasionally be obtained, but this is comparatively rare.

Of spring mornings a more original form of sport is practised. It would be inter-

esting to know why all birds of prey bear a personal enmity to the horned owl; but the question is one that we cannot pretend to answer. The fact, however, is beyond question, and it is one of which gamekeepers and others make full use. A bird of this kind is caught or reared. He does not make a very amusing pet; but it is not his mission in life to be amiable—that is the very last thing his master expects or wishes from him, if he were to get really tame he would be useless. He learns to know the man who feeds him, and to regard him with a little more tolerance than other members of the human family; but even his keeper must handle him with the greatest caution, as his beak and talons are formidable weapons, and he has no scruple whatever about using them. Most foresters in the higher Austrian Alps have an owl of this kind, or at least know there is one in the neighborhood which they can borrow on occasion.

When you have an owl, the next thing is to determine the scene of your exploits. An exposed upland meadow bordered by woods is the best. Here a kind of hut is built of branches lopped from the neighboring trees, in such a way as to conceal the persons within while allowing them a free outlook in all directions. At a convenient distance, and generally somewhat above the hut, a dead and leafless bough, with a single cross branch from three to four feet above the earth, is erected. It must be stout and firmly driven into the turf; for it is to serve as a perch for your owl, which is heavy and by no means wanting in vigor. When these arrangements have been made, it is best to leave the place unvisited for two or three days.

On the day when the adventure is to be consummated the sportsman carries his gun and the keeper the owl to the hut; the latter is fastened to the stake by a light chain, which must be long enough to enable the bird to flutter from the perch to the ground, and go a yard or so in every direction. To the chain a long cord is attached, the other end of which is placed

in the hut. Its purpose is to enliven the owl. If he shows signs of drowsiness a slight pull will wake him up, and a rather stronger one will induce him to flutter down from the branch or to return to it again, as the case may be. As soon as these arrangements have been completed everybody present retires to the hut, and the owl seats himself on his perch and turns his head round and round with an expression in his eyes which seems to say that he is disgusted with things in general and his own position in particular.

If the sportsman has any luck, a flight of the small mountain crows will soon circle, cawing loudly, above their feathered enemy. They have a bad name as egg-stealers; but the forester does not shoot at them, because he knows their angry cries are likely to attract larger birds, and they themselves rarely venture to attack the owl. If they do, it simply raises all its feathers, which make it look twice its real size and are a sufficient protection. When threatened by more powerful enemies, it flutters down and throws itself on its back; in this position it is a match for all but the very largest birds of prey. It rarely comes to this, however, since as soon as a hawk or raven is fairly within shot it is usually brought down or else frightened away by the discharge of the gun.

This sport may be practised with success at almost any hour except full noon, but the dawn is considered the best time; and such an excursion to one of the huts has many charms besides those that depend upon the slaughter of birds which, however hateful they may be to the gamekeeper, the lonely wanderer can hardly help regarding as his comrades. The sharp night walk through the light mountain air, the gradual awakening of nature, the scent of the fir-trees, are all enjoyments in themselves; and it may be added that they tend to sharpen your appetite for the excellent, though simple, lunch which your host, if he be a true sportsman, will certainly have provided.

THE GREAT RED SPOT.—Astronomers have always been much interested in the "great red spot" on the planet Jupiter. Mr. Denning is of opinion that it represents an opening in the aerial envelope of the planet through which we see the denser vapors of its lower strata. The lighter tints observed dur-

ing the last few years are probably due to the filling in of the cavity by the encroachment of the clouds in the vicinity. Parts of some of the more prominent belts display an intense red hue, like that of the old red spot, and they may be due to the same causes.



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